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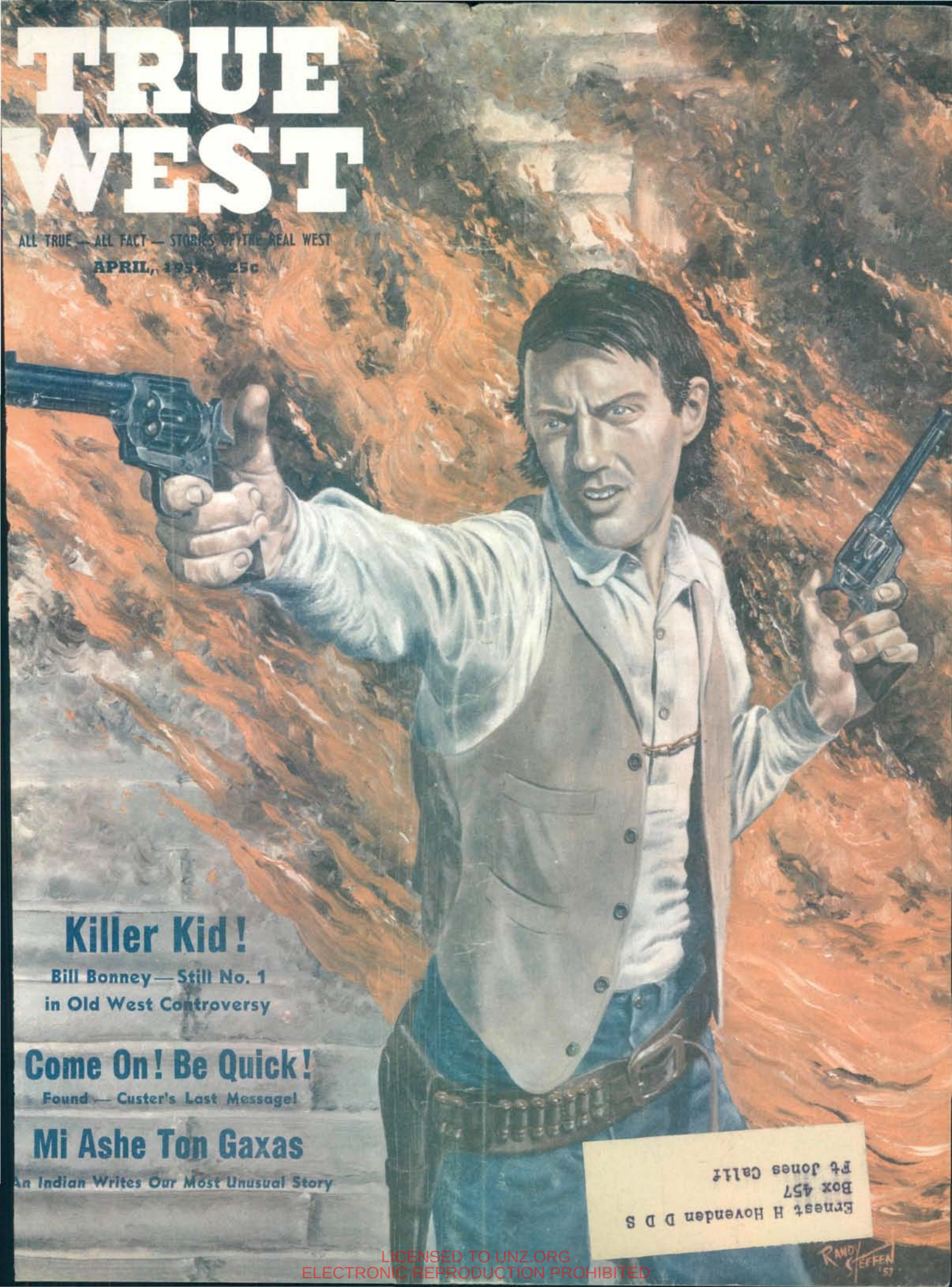

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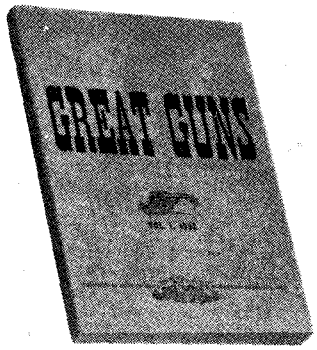

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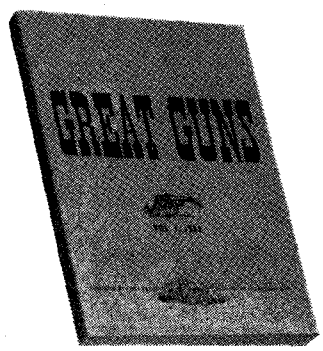

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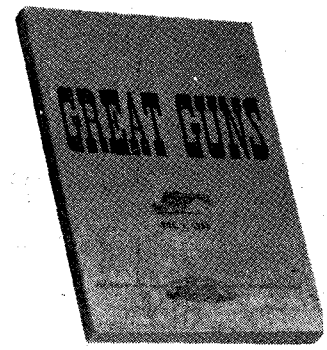

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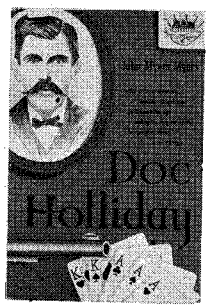

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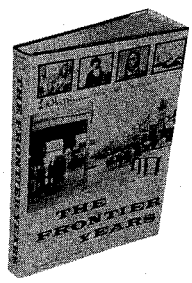

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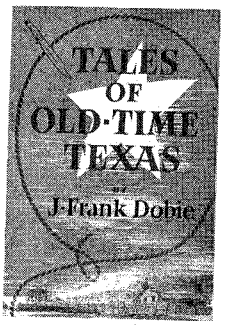

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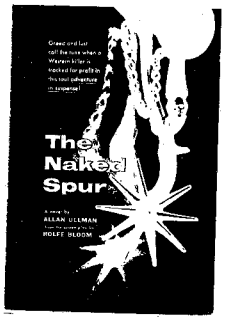

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Coming Up!

FOR sheer variety of content, the next issue of TRUE WEST will be hard to beat. Lois Miller's "Potato Creek Johnnie's Big Find" leads off—an appealing yarn of a little old pint-size prospector who finally struck it rich in a way he hadn't figured on. Nothing spectacular, nothing dramatic—but as true a study of that fast-dwindling breed of rugged men, the old-time lone prospectors, as we have ever read. Complete with excellent photographs, this story will warm your heart—and maybe even bring a tear to your eye as well.

Still on the subject of prospectors and gold, this is a good spot to mention that J. Frank Dobie returns next issue with a thrilling piece on The Lost Breyfogle Mine. Placed in the somber setting of Death Valley and the stark and desolate Funeral Mountains, Mr. Dobie's article gives you additional insight into the minds and hearts of the solitary wanderers of the wastelands who—doomed by the elusive, maddening lure of Gold—forever seek "the gleam that can never be grasped."

Ernie Cashel was one of those youngsters growing up around the turn of the twentieth century who figured that Fate had dealt them a raw deal by bringing them into the world thirty years too late for high adventure. But whereas most youths quickly settled down to a job and marriage, Ernie Cashel decided to be a two-gun desperado like his favorite dime-novel hero, Jesse James. Leaving Wyoming for new frontiers in Alberta, Ernie found that the Northwest Mounted Police were not the men to overlook robbery and murder. Norm Wiltsey tells the gripping story of a tough kid who tried to make the Wild West live again, in his article "Young Jesse James."

Yarns of gun-fighters are ever popular with TW fans, so we present the story of one of the lesser-known but none the less deadly gun-slingers in "Courtright the Longhaired," by that veteran writer of Western tales, Eugene Cunningham. Jim Courtright was proud of his long hair and even more proud of his flashing speed at drawing his Colts. Ranger Captain Jim Gillett rated Courtright as good as Wes Hardin or Ben Thompson when it came to a showdown shoot-out. But the cool little gambler, Luke Short, knew that the biggest reputations are vulnerable to a bullet—and proved it.

Tom Horn is another of the fascinating controversial figures in Old West history sure to stir up a ruckus among students of Western Americana. Author Lauran Paine states unequivocally that Tom was a despicable character—a murderer for hire. He presents his thesis that Horn richly deserved the death sentence he received, in a boldly written article titled "The Passing of Tom Horn."

Rarely will you find an instance wherein three lawmen of the caliber of Wyatt Earp, Bat Masterson and Bill Tilghman joined forces in a gun-scrape, but such is the case in Robert K. DeArment's vivid tale of a Kansas county seat war in 1889. In fact, it was the last such war in Kansas before ballots replaced bullets in the hot political skirmishes of the state.

AN interesting off-trail story is Frank Barnes' eye-witness account of the "Great Texas Train Crash" in 1896. Frank was the fireman of Number 999, one of the two locomotives involved in this spectacular, deliberately planned train wreck. W. G. Crush, later general passenger agent for the M.K.T. Railroad, promoted the crash as a publicity stunt for the M.K.T. Forty thousand people came from all over the U.S. to see the two trains collide. The story has been told and retold for sixty years, whenever railroad men get together. Various versions of the yarn have appeared in newspapers and magazines. The last magazine story of the

(Continued on page 48)

March-April, 1957
Volume 4, No. 4
Whole No. 20

True West

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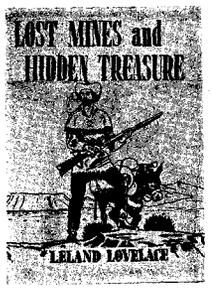
Western Americana

LOST MINES and HIDDEN TREASURE

By
LELAND LOVELACE



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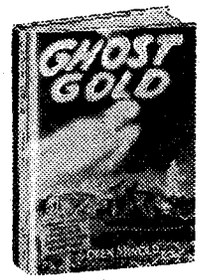

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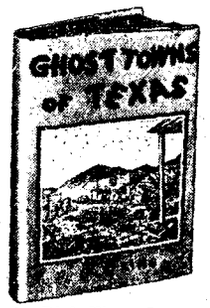

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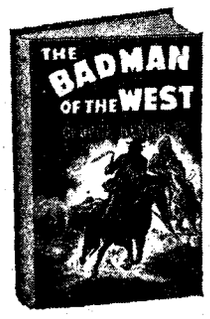

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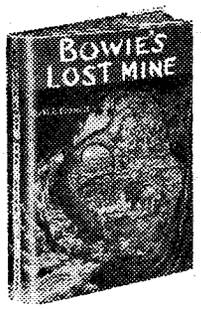

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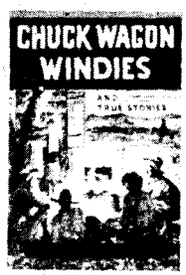

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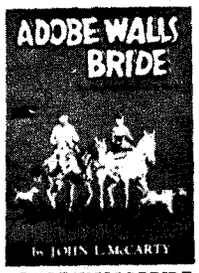

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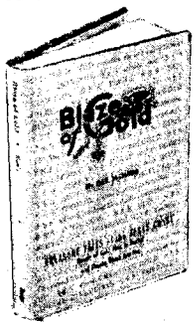

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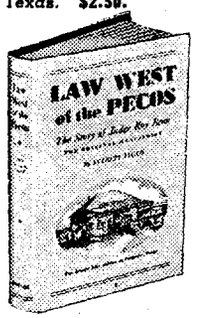

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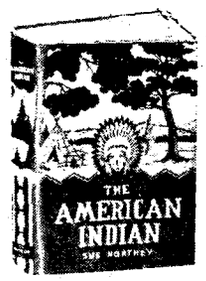

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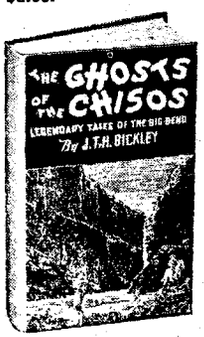

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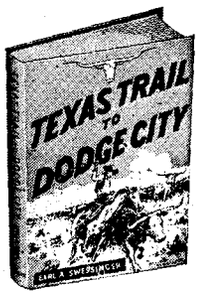

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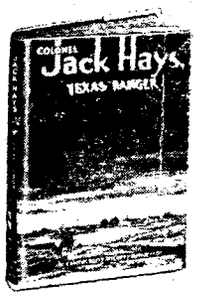

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KILLER KID!

BY NORMAN B. WILTSEY

Sheriff Pat Garrett called him "135 pounds of rattlesnake." His friend, George Coe, described him as "a good game kid who'd lay down his life for a pal." Wherever the truth may lie, Billy the Kid remains one of the most controversial and fascinating figures of the Old West.

Illustrated By Randy Steffen

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Allow me to state right off before the shooting starts that I am very well aware of the heated controversy that flares sporadically among students of Western Americana on Billy the Kid. I know, for example, that many folks believe that Billy's real name was actually McCarty (or McCarthy) instead of Bonney; that he never killed more than four or five men in his short outlaw career, etc. Billy's confusing story has always fascinated me, and it was with the hope of clarifying the mystery surrounding him that I spent a month in the Billy the Kid country in the summer of 1956, the 75th anniversary of the Kid's death. I went first to Lincoln, New Mexico, talked to old-timers there, and learned that they too were confused as to the Kid's origin and adventures.

In the courthouse, at the scene where Billy killed deputies Bell and Ollinger and staged his incredible escape on the evening of April 28, 1881, one man assured me solemnly that Billy's name was indeed Bonney and that he had started his career of crime at the age of twelve by knifing a man in Silver City. Down the street, in McSween's old store, another veteran of seventy-five or more vehemently denied both claims, saying bluntly that they were "damn lies dreamed up by fool writers!" To him, Billy the Kid was Hank McCarty, an ordinary cowboy who got mixed up in the Lincoln County War and drifted from there down the outlaw trail to his violent end. (Either viewpoint could be true. Logically, I incline to the latter—but I could find positive proof of neither.)

Conflicting statements multiplied wherever I traveled: Roswell, Fort Sumner, Santa Fe. I tried to sift them objectively, taking into careful consideration each informant's personal attitude toward the Kid. It was tough going, but finally—after much digging, selection and rejection—I assembled enough material from old-timers and printed "records"—books, articles, etc.—to write this article. This is not intended in any sense to be "the final word" on Billy the Kid—I do not claim to have assembled absolute, incontrovertible facts. It could well be that the true story of Billy the Kid can never be written. But a start has to be made somewhere, and this article is our bold plunge to obtain the truth. We, at TRUE WEST, hope to get that truth from you, the readers. Write us what you know or think you know of Billy the Kid. Analyze and criticize constructively; not destructively. We hope you can help—and also hope that you enjoy reading the story. Let's hear from you!

—NBW

HE squatted with his back against the wall of the ancient Governor's Palace (now used as a frontier museum) in Santa Fe, New Mexico; an old, old Mexican, whose gnarled fingers were painfully engaged in rolling a wispy cigarette. His name was Juan Padilla, and I had been told that I would find him there, sitting in the sun and dreaming of other days. In this 75th anniversary year of Billy the Kid's death, he was one of the few men living who had known the Kid. In my travels through New Mexico, I had tried unsuccessfully to find some living link with Billy the Kid Bonney. Acting on a tip received in Lincoln, I had come to Santa Fe. My search had ended there, in the very sundrenched plaza where Billy had played as a child.

I offered Juan Padilla a cigarette, and stated my name and business. The old man accepted the cigarette without comment. He also smoked it without comment, his rheumy eyes deliberately avoiding me. An Indian child shyly offered me a bit of pottery, and I handed him a half-dollar for it. That seemed to please the old man, and for the first time he smiled. Finally he spoke:

"It is true, *senor,* that I knew Billy the Kid. Many times I have seen him dancing gayly at our *bailes* and *fiestas.* I was a small boy playing in the street on the day he killed his jailers and rode out of Lincoln toward the mountains, a song on his lips and the fear of him white upon the face of every man who watched. He waved to me and tossed me a coin as he passed."

Juan Padilla paused to accept another cigarette. I lit it for him.

"Senor," he continued, "I do not know if Billy was the bad man many people now say he was. It is true that he killed many men; some of whom would have killed him if he had not shot first. It is true that he robbed the rich cattlemen. It is also true that he was always kind and generous to my people, who did not have it easy in those hard times. It is not for men to judge him; judging is for God alone. We Mexicans did not judge him nor question him. We called him *El Chivato,* and we loved him for his gayety and the goodness of his heart. I will help you with his story; I will tell you all I know of him."

This, then, is the Story of Billy the Kid, as gleaned from the lips of Juan Padilla; from the various records available, including the printed reminiscenses of Sheriff Pat Garrett who once was his friend, yet, in the name of the law, hunted him down and killed him; from the published memories of rancher George Coe, who rode with the Kid on at least one of his expeditions and knew and de-

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The Kid, turning in his saddle, saw Morton and Baker trying to escape. He raised his Winchester and fired twice.

fended him as a fiercely loyal friend; also from the tales told by old-timers in Lincoln, Fort Sumner, and Santa Fe. From the whole, a picture of Billy the Kid emerged—a picture which, if not accurate in all details, is—I hope—faithful in spirit, color and atmosphere to the smiling Killer Kid and his strange, wild times.

"HOW about a kiss, sweetheart?"

The young blacksmith lurched toward pretty Kate Antrim, the stink of rotgut whiskey foul on his breath. Kate shrank away from him in terror. Billy, her twelve-year-old son, shouted shrilly at the amorous lout— then picked up a stone and hurled it at him. The hastily aimed stone flew high, knocking off the blacksmith's hat. He lunged at the boy, only to be knocked down by a tall plainsman standing at the edge of the wooden sidewalk. Mouthing oaths, the blacksmith crawled to his feet and staggered into a saloon.

Breathlessly, Mrs. Antrim thanked the rescuer, who bowed and announced his name as Andy Moulton. Mother and son then headed home, Mrs. Antrim hurrying the boy along to get off the street in Silver City, New Mexico, before dark.

On the following Saturday night, young Billy stood watching a poker game in Dan Dyer's saloon. The blacksmith played in the game; Andy Moulton drank beer at the bar. The atmosphere was tense. Another clash was brewing between the two men. Billy could feel the growing tension in his taut nerves as he waited for the explosion.

Through the batwing doors swaggered two husky teamsters. One of them approached the bar, roughly jostled Andy Moulton. The plainsman shoved him away with a sharp warning. Both men attacked Moulton, and in a flash, Andy was defending himself vigorously in a hot three-cornered fight.

That was the chance the blacksmith awaited. Quickly he jumped to his feet and rushed Moulton from behind, swinging a chair with both hands. And just as quickly, twelve-year-old Billy leaped upon his back. A knife flashed—and the blacksmith took three staggering steps and fell face down on the floor. The blood gushing from his severed jugular soaked the dirty sawdust into crimson mud.

Sobbing with fury, Billy backed away from the body of the man he had killed. Wide-eyed, the two teamsters stared at the gory corpse as if hypnotized. Only Andy Moulton reacted swiftly to the situation.

"Run, kid, run!" shouted the plainsman. "Get out of town *muy pronto*—and keep on goin'!"

Billy dropped his bloody knife, whirled and sprinted out the back door. As he plunged into the covering darkness of the moonless summer night, he heard hoarse voices behind him yelling: "Young Billy Bonney killed him—sliced his neck with a knife . . . Billy Bonney . . . Billy the Kid . . . !"

SO it happened; the act of blind, unreasoning violence that touched off Billy the Kid's savage career of robbery and murder. Desperately he raced home from Dyer's saloon, told his mother what had happened, kissed her goodbye and fled Silver City on foot. His mother never saw him again.

BILLY BONNEY was born in New York City on November 23, 1859. William and Kate Bonney, his parents, emigrated in 1862 to Coffeyville, Kansas, taking with them three-year-old Bill Junior, and a tiny baby brother named Edward. There, early in 1862, Bill Bonney, Senior died of cholera.

After the funeral, his courageous widow pushed on to Denver, Colorado, where she met and married a man named Jack Antrim and set about remakeing her life. Unfortunately, Kate had picked a wanderer and a gambler for a second husband. No sooner had the marriage vows been spoken when the Antrims were on the move from Denver to Santa Fe.

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William H. Bonney, alias "Billy the Kid." Billy was the youngest of the famed badmen of the old West.

Photos from Frontier Pix

Sheriff Pat Garrett, who killed Billy the Kid one midnight at Fort Sumner, in 1881.

There, in the picturesque old Spanish town, young Billy got his first thrilling taste of the frontier. Along with numberless Mexican kids, Billy played scouts-and-Indians in the sunlit plaza and in the gloomy shadow of the ancient Governor's Palace, where, in the old days before the *Americanos* took over Santa Fe from the Mexican authorities, strings of dried Indian ears were festooned about the thick adobe walls as a grim warning to visiting redmen to behave themselves.

At home, however, the setup was bad for the impressionable youngster. Adoring his mother, Billy hated his stepfather, Jack Antrim. Jack, who preferred playing poker and monte to working, allowed his wife to support him and the boys by running a boarding house. After three years in Santa Fe, the Antrims moved to Silver City, a booming silver mining camp in southwestern New Mexico. Here Jack got himself a job in the mines, while Kate opened another boarding house.

Billy attended school for the first time at Silver City, but he preferred sneaking off to watch the card games in the saloons. At the age of ten he had become the pet of the professional gamblers in Silver City, and could deal aces off the bottom of a deck of cards with a skill unmatched by Jack Antrim himself.

Yet it was not card playing that drove Billy to murder at the age of twelve. A fiery temper and his fierce loyalty to a friend combined to turn the trick. It was not the last time that the deadly combination of emotions turned Billy Bonney into a killer.

For the next four years after that terrible night in Silver City not much is known of Billy's haunted wanderings. It is believed that he drifted to Arizona and worked as an apprentice cowhand on cattle ranches between the Mogollon Mountains and the Mexican border. During this shadowy period of his short life he became an expert rider and a crack shot with either rifle or six-gun. At sixteen he bobbed up in Fort Bowie, a frontier military post in southwestern Arizona. There he dealt monte for a living and picked up a fast buck any way he could.

You can take your choice of half a dozen lurid yarns as to how he spent the next two years; none can be confirmed. In any event, the Kid showed up at the ranch of George and Frank Coe, in the Pecos Valley, in the fall of 1877. Tattered and weary, astride a horse more dead than alive, the Kid told a wild tale of being chased by an Apache war party and killing four of the warriors in a thirty-mile running fight. The Coe brothers accepted this fantastic yarn apparently without question and offered Billy hospitality for the winter. He remained at the Coe ranch until mid-January, when he left to take a job as a cowhand with the English rancher, J. H. Tunstall, at Tunstall's ranch on the Rio Feliz, thirty miles south of the tough frontier town of Lincoln, New Mexico.

TUNSTALL, a wealthy Britisher, had settled in Lincoln county only a couple of years before Billy's arrival in the territory. Already, however, he had incurred the deadly enmity of Major L. J. Murphy, rancher, politician, Lincoln store and hotel owner and Lincoln county's self-styled boss. Bucking Murphy's commercial monopoly, Tunstall, with a couple of partners, opened a combination store-and-bank in Lincoln. This establishment, efficiently operated by a young lawyer named Alex McSween, cut deeply into Murphy's fat trading profits and lacerated his pride even more.

Sinister charges were fired back and forth by the principals in the growing feud. Cattle king, John Chisum, and Tunstall openly accused Murphy of stealing cattle from their herds to add to his own. Murphy countered by charging that Tunstall and McSween had maneuvered him out of a $10,000 insurance policy owed him by a former business partner for debts. The whole complicated mess blew up on February 13, 1878, when Murphy sent a posse of twenty men ostensibly to serve an attachment against Tunstall's ranch for the recovery of the $10,000 he claimed was owed him. Actually, the Major's real objective was the murder of the genial Englishman.

At noon on the 13th, Tunstall had set off for Lincoln accompanied by his foreman, Dick Brewer, and Billy the Kid. Crossing the divide between the Rio Feliz and the Ruidoso on the way to town, the three horsemen flushed a flock of wild turkeys. Brewer and the Kid rode into the chapparal after the turkeys, planning to bag a couple and rejoin Tunstall farther along the trail.

Jogging along alone, the rancher suddenly heard the thunder of many horses' hoofs behind him. Around a bend in the trail galloped the Lincoln "posse," Deputy Sheriff Billy Morton and Tom Hill in the lead. The Murphy gunmen, short-cutting across the hills from Lincoln, had ridden first to Tunstall's ranch house. Finding it deserted, they had followed the fresh hoof-prints of Tunstall's party.

The Englishman turned his mount and waited curiously for the racing horsemen to overtake him. "Hello, boys!" he called out pleasantly as the posse pounded up on him. "What's up? Something—"

Billy Morton and Tom Hill fired together, toppling the rancher from his saddle. Tunstall was dead when he hit the ground, but the gunmen took no chances. Tom Hill put the muzzle of his Winchester to the back of Tunstall's head and blew out his brains. Another of Murphy's brave gang hammered what was left of Tunstall's skull to pieces with a rock. Then they shot the rancher's horse, left the bodies of both horse and owner beside the trail, and rode on toward Lincoln.

From the crest of a distant hill, Dick Brewer and Billy the Kid witnessed the shooting. Billy, recognizing the mounts of Billy Morton and Morton's pal, Frank Baker, turned to Brewer and cried in fury: "I'll get Morton and Baker for this! I'll shoot down every man of that murdering gang I can find!"

Brewer nodded somberly. *"Bueno,* Kid. I'm with you on that. But right now, let's get back to the ranch. We can't fight twenty men."

THE Kid's vengeance was not long delayed. Moving fast, Alex McSween had Dick Brewer sworn in as a special constable before Lincoln Justice of the Peace Wilson. Ignoring the protests of Murphy-dominated Sheriff Brady, Brewer assembled a posse and swore the members in as Deputies armed with legal warrants for the arrest of Tunstall's murderers. These formalities completed, the posse of ten picked gunmen started at once for the Seven Rivers stronghold of Murphy's partisans—the remote back country where Tunstall's killers had fled for sanctuary. In the

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band of experienced gunmen rode eighteen-year-old Billy the Kid.

At a crossing of the Penasco River, near its juncture with the Pecos, the posse met a scouting party of five Murphy gunmen. The enemy fired a single volley that hit nobody, then wheeled their horses in flight. The Kid, spotting Billy Morton's buckskin pony and Frank Baker's flashy pinto, rode hard in pursuit. Three of the fugitives escaped in the heavy brush, but Billy clung to the trail of Baker and Morton and shot down both their horses after a wild seven-mile chase. The killers hit the ground running and holed up in an abandoned sod dugout. Two days and two nights the doomed pair held off the posse before they shot away all their ammunition and surrendered.

When Morton and Baker came out of the dugout with their hands in the air, the first member of the McSween posse they faced was Billy the Kid.

"Howdy, Kid," grinned Baker in shaky bravado.

"Howdy, Billy," chimed in Morton.

The Kid's gray eyes glinted like ice in his boyish, wind-burned face. "Don't howdy *me,* you dirty murderers!" he snarled. "You killed the only real friend I ever had. I'm going to shoot you down like dogs for it!"

Tom McCloskey, a veteran buffalo hunter who had joined the posse strictly for adventure, was shocked by the Kid's cold-blooded declaration.

"Hell, Billy, that ain't no way to talk. These boys are entitled to a fair trial by jury—a chance for their lives."

Billy stared hard at McCloskey. "How much chance did Tunstall have for *his* life?" he asked evenly—and turned away.

ON the lonely trail to Lincoln from the Seven Rivers country lies *Agua Negra*—a spring known as the Black Water. Billy Morton and Frank Baker were killed near *Agua Negra;* just *how* they were killed has never been proven. According to Billy the Kid's account of what happened to Baker and Morton, he and Charlie Bowdre were leading the posse at this point with Jack Middleton and Tom McCloskey guarding the prisoners close behind. Frank McNab, who had been drinking rotgut, rode up from the rear and began quarreling violently with McCloskey. The quarrel exploded suddenly into murder when McNab whipped out his colt and drilled McCloskey through the heart.

The Kid, turning in his saddle at the sound of the shot, saw Morton and Baker spurring their horses in a frantic attempt to escape. Billy raised his Winchester and fired twice. Baker and Morton pitched dead from their saddles.

Another version of the killings flatly accused Billy of deliberately murdering the two prisoners by shooting them in the back of the head as they knelt by the edge of the Black Water pleading for their lives. Either account *could* be true; one of them almost certainly is.

Shortly after Morton and Baker were murdered by Billy the Kid, Dick Brewer was killed in a gun-fight by Buckshot Bill Roberts—described by the Kid as "one of Murphy's goddam scalp hunters." With the death of Brewer, Billy moved into command as head gunman of the McSween forces in the all-out fight against Major Murphy that soon was to become famous as "The Lincoln County War." The first "official" statement made by the new boy leader of the McSween faction was the bold announcement that he intended to "execute" both Major Murphy and his cats-paw, Sheriff Brady.

Frontier Pix

The courthouse at Lincoln, New Mexico, where the Kid killed his two jailers and made his sensational escape.

On the morning of April 1, 1878, a group of four men left Murphy's store in the direction of the courthouse: Deputy Sheriffs George Hindman and "Dad" Peppin, Sheriff Brady and Circuit Court Clerk Billy Matthews. Strolling along the board sidewalk idly talking, they didn't notice a white handkerchief waved as a signal from the roof of a house across the street nor observe the answering flash of white from behind the low adobe wall east of McSween's store. Behind that wall, with cocked rifles leveled, waited Billy the Kid, Charlie Bowdre, Tom O'Folliard, Jim French, Frank McNab and Fred Wayte.

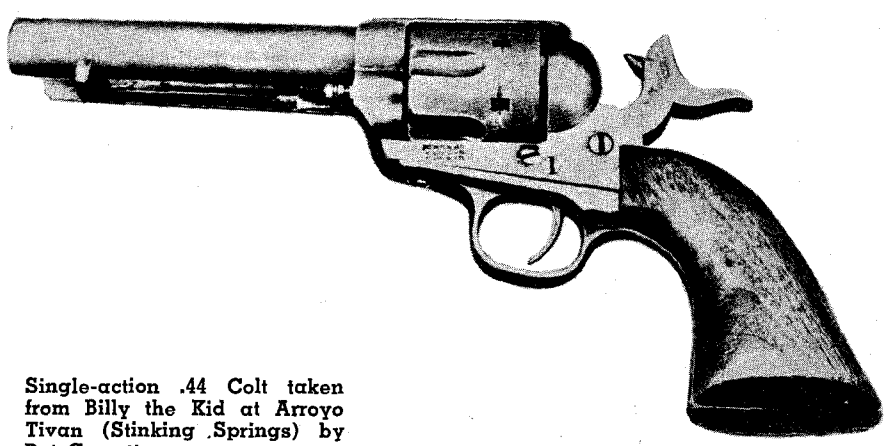
The Kid held his fire until Brady and his party were within a hundred feet of the ambush, then yelled: "Okay, boys, let 'em have it!"

Brady went down at the first volley, riddled by six bullets. Hindman caught it on the second round, flinging wide his arms and falling face-down on the walk before San Juan Church. Peppin and Matthews dashed through the open door of a Mexican house beside the church and escaped.

Sheriff Brady's murder gave the McSween forces a temporary advantage in the grim battle for supremacy in Lincoln County. Again moving fast, Alex McSween appointed John Copeland Sheriff of Lincoln County by means of a so-called "election" presided over by Billy the Kid and fifty crack gunmen. Actually, like Sheriff Brady before him, Copeland was but a figurehead in the Sheriff's office—a docile pawn for the convenience of his electors. Canny old John Chisum, from his vast South Spring Ranch in the Pecos Valley, dictated orders to Copeland through his lieutenant Alex McSween and his head gunman, Billy the Kid.

MAJOR MURPHY, acting at once to counter McSween's clever strategy, went to Santa Fe to present his case to Governor Samuel B. Axtell. In citing to the Governor the murders of Morton, Baker and Sheriff Brady, Murphy declared that the whole of Lincoln County was under the domination of that "savage and murderous young outlaw, Billy the Kid." Naturally the Major neglected to mention that the Murphy-engineered killing of rancher Tunstall had touched off the war in the first place. Without properly investigating the truth of Major Murphy's story, Governor Axtell promptly removed Sheriff Copeland from office and appointed old "Dad" Peppin in his place.

One Government official in Santa Fe refused to accept Axtell's hasty action as fair to both sides in the Lincoln County muddle. U. S. Commissioner Angell journeyed to Washington to present his



Single-action .44 Colt taken from Billy the Kid at Arroyo Tivan (Stinking Springs) by Pat Garrett.

Frontier Pix

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"Hello, Bob!" Fearfully, Ollinger looked up into the mocking gray eyes of Billy the Kid. . . .

view of the complex situation to President Hayes. The President removed Governor Axtell from office and replaced him with General Lew Wallace. The General was granted "extraordinary powers" to clean up the mess in Lincoln County and restore law and order to the entire territory.

Unfortunately, all this took time. Before General Wallace arrived in New Mexico early in August of 1878, the rival clans clashed in a three-day bloody battle to virtually end the Lincoln County War.

The ball opened on July 15. McSween lieutenant Martin Chavez, with a force of twenty-five men, garrisoned two houses at the east end of Lincoln. Charlie Bowdre, Hank Brown and George Coe held the McSween store, just to the west of McSween's house. With leader McSween, in his adobe house, was Billy the Kid and ten gunmen; three women, Mrs. McSween, Mrs. Shield, her sister, and Mrs. Ealy, a guest, also occupied the house.

Arrayed against the McSween men, forty heavily armed Murphy gun-fighters held the Major's store and the hotel adjoining, within short rifle range of the McSween house. Murphy sharpshooters, armed with long-range Sharps buffalo rifles, were posted on the hills behind the village.

Desultory firing from both sides marked the first day of the fight, with little damage resulting. As darkness descended and the shooting ceased, the Kid turned to Alex McSween and remarked: "This house is a death trap. Let's get the hell out of here tonight and join up with Chavez."

McSween shook his head. "No, we'll stay here. These men will not harm the women-folk if we stay inside these walls. Once we leave this house, we may all be killed."

Billy laughed wryly. "If we stay *here*, boss, we damn sure will all get killed!"

The tall leader, a deeply religious man for all his involvement in a frontier feud, ignored the Kid. He opened his Bible and began to read aloud from the Twenty-third Psalm: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil . . ."

Billy shrugged carelessly, and took up his post at a loop-hole facing Murphy's store.

SNIPING was continual from both sides during the second day. Murphy's men feared to rush the McSween stronghold, and seemed content to keep up a steady barrage of rifle-fire. By keeping below the level of the windows and out of line of the doors, the defenders were safe from all but a glancing bullet.

At sunset, McSween expressed the hope that the shooting was about over. "Surely, by this time, our enemies must realize that we cannot be driven from Lincoln," argued the leader.

"You're dead wrong, boss," replied the Kid. "These fellows will never quit until they get us. The only chance we have for our lives is to get out of this house while there's still time."

"Such a course would mean only more bloodshed," cried McSween sternly. "No, with God's help, we will stay here in my home until these madmen come to their senses and leave us in peace!"

Billy smiled his easy, boyish smile. "Have it your way, boss. But take my tip and start making out your will, *muy pronto*. I've got a hunch that tomorrow night will be the pay-off."

The Kid was right. On the third night, covered by a heavy rifle fusillade from their comrades, two of Murphy's men sneaked up in the dark and set fire to the rear wooden section of McSween's house. The flames, fanned by a strong wind, swept rapidly through the wooden interior of the adobe dwelling and forced the defenders into the open. After the women had been allowed to pass unmolested to safety by the besiegers; McSween, his ten gunmen and the Kid dashed through the crackling flames in a desperate attempt to escape.

McSween went first, holding his empty hands high in a futile gesture of peace. He was the first to fall; four of his men were shot down right behind him. Last of all to leave the burning house was Billy the Kid. Six-guns blazing, the Kid raced for the adobe wall at the back of the house. Bullets zipped all around him, pierced his hat and shirt, but—as by a miracle—none touched his body. At the wall he paused for a fleeting instant to turn and snap a shot at Bob Beckwith, killer of Alex McSween. Beckwith, drilled dead center, crumpled to the ground in death thirty feet from the body of the unarmed man he had murdered. The Kid whooped and leaped the wall at a bound. He had avenged Alex McSween as he had avenged Tunstall before him.

BY the time Governor Wallace reached Lincoln in early August, the war between the feuding clans was practically over. Six men had died in the three-day battle; the sullen survivors on both sides had had enough of fighting for the present. Such was the tense situation in Lincoln County when Wallace arrived at the Ellis House in Lincoln. The Governor immediately proclaimed an amnesty for all who had taken part in the fighting except those under indictment for previous crimes.

Hiding out in the Capitan Mountains after his dramatic escape, Billy the Kid heard the news of Wallace's remarkably generous proclamation from a loyal Mexican friend. One of the Governor's provisos, however, was unacceptable to the Kid. Wallace firmly stipulated that all men accepting amnesty must first lay down their weapons. This the Kid dared not do. He sent a messenger to Governor Wallace, announcing his refusal and asking for a chance to explain in person. Wallace wrote back:

"Come to the house of old Squire Wilson at nine o'clock next Monday night, *alone*. Not his office, but his residence. Follow along the mountain south of the town. Come in on that side and knock at the east door . . .

"The object of the meeting at Squire Wilson's is to arrange the matter in a way to make your life safe. To do that the utmost secrecy is to be used. *So, come alone*. Don't tell anybody—not a living soul—where you are coming, or the object . . ."

(Continued on page 30)

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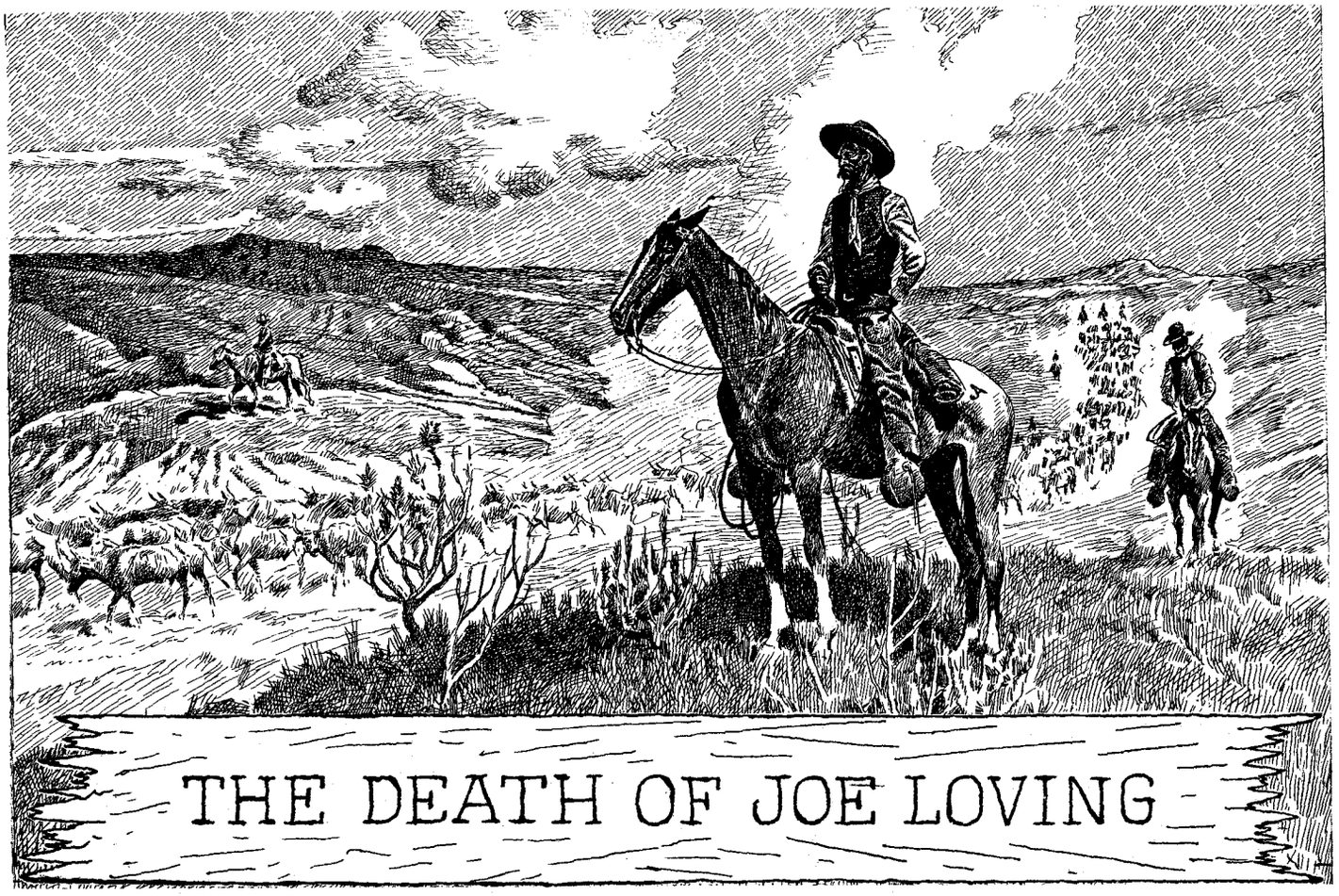

THE DEATH OF JOE LOVING

BY MARC PETERSON

Illustrated By B. D. Titsworth

Wounded by Comanche bullets, Joe Loving said: "I'm dying. No sense of your getting killed too. Get out of here and get back to the outfit."

FOR scores of decades prior to the Civil War, longhorned cattle by the thousands roamed the vast spaces of southern Texas. Since there was no available market for beef, it had no value. The end of the Civil War brought railroad penetration into the Midwest on a transcontinental scale, providing the necessary link between this vast hoofed wealth and the meat-hungry millions of the East. Some daring cattlemen, realizing the potential value of their animals, initiated the "long drive" between Texas, Dodge City and Abilene, western termini of the railroads at that period.

In 1866 rancher Charles Goodnight remarked that the Palo Pinto country was alive with cattle lacking a market. He determined to find a northern market. Goodnight knew that in New Mexico, Government agencies needed beef to feed the many Indians they were "loose herding" there. He also knew that to reach these agencies he would have to cross hostile Comanche country.

The next problem Goodnight faced was to find a reliable man to go with him on this perilous drive. He asked several men before he met Joe Loving. Joe was probably the most experienced cattleman in Texas at that time, as well as the first man to trail a herd out of the state. Goodnight was plenty discouraged when he met Loving, for each previous candidate for the trip discovered he had pressing business elsewhere when propositioned. Goodnight didn't blame them, for the desolate region he planned to cross swarmed with Comanches. Furthermore, nobody knew the conditions as to water and grass—the prime requisites in moving herds of cattle. Nevertheless, when Goodnight told Loving of his daring plan, Joe studied on it a spell, spat reflectively and "allowed" he'd take a hand.

IN the spring of 1867, the two men had contracts for the delivery of two herds at Fort Sumner. Having begun their roundup early in March, Goodnight and Loving reached the headwaters of the Concho by the end of March with the two herds. Each herd numbered about two thousand head.

"We'll stop here long enough to put a good fill on the herds," said Goodnight, "and point straight west for the Pecos."

A ninety-six mile expanse called the *Llano Estacado* (Staked Plain) lay before them. After two days' rest, the herds were thrown on the trail and driven away to the west, without rest or stop, for three days and four nights. The weather was extremely hot and the alkali dust rose up over the caravan in a huge cloud, marking its progress for miles.

At a distance of fifteen miles from the Pecos, the appearance of the herds suddenly changed; heads were eagerly raised, and the leaders stepped briskly forward and broke into a trot. This phenomenon of a trail herd sensing water has never been satisfactorily explained, but veteran cowboys say the cattle *smell* the water even at a distance of many miles.

Now the cattle no longer had to be driven. The cowboys had to work hard to restrain the beasts, otherwise when the lead cattle reached the Pecos, the ones behind would run them into the water and drown them.

Both herds lay at rest at Horsehead Crossing for three days before starting north for Fort Sumner. Then came the drive up the wide, level valley of the Pecos, through thickets of tornilla and mesquite, horses and cattle grazing belly-deep in the juicy zacaton.

Although they had a few skirmishes with the Comanches and lost a few hundred head of cattle, and though Loving got an arrow through the neck which Goodnight pulled out with a pair of nippers, they kept moving steadily along.

Late in June, when the partners were a hundred miles north of Horsehead Crossing, they decided to separate. It was necessary for one of them to reach Fort Sumner before the beef contracts were awarded in July, and also to make arrangements for the arrival of the two herds. So it was decided that Loving and Bill Wilson would go ahead. Wilson was a one-armed cattleman who had brought a herd up from the Clear Fork of the Brazos.

It was a dangerous trip for two men to make alone. "The only way you can make it, Joe," cautioned Goodnight, "is to ride at night and hole up during the day."

"Sure, Charley," Loving agreed casually.

The first two nights out they followed Goodnight's advice.

(Continued on page 42)

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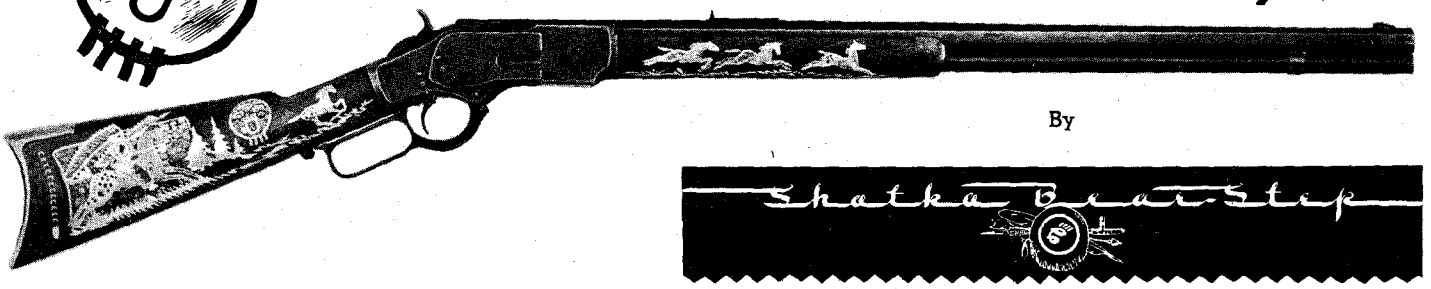
MI ASHE TON GAXAS

(STEALTHS OF THE DARK MOON)



By

Shatka Bear-Step

This Winchester 73 has been handed down through four generations of American Indians. It is now the possession of his great grandson, "Ponytracks," Dick Spencer III, editor of Western Horseman Magazine.

Here is another unique TRUE WEST feature story — an article *on* Indians written by *an* Indian. No phony Wild West heroics, but the kind of piece that you'd never get from a white writer. We think it is one of the most unusual stories ever to come into our offices.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: The following events occurred in the lives of three American Indians—tribal renegades and horse thieves, who established a precedent that saved the lives of many white pioneers of the early West. S. B.

"PUT fun in your life while you may, young man. The downhill slope is steeper than you think!" Those were the words of one of the great leaders of his profession; Go Don Bear-Step, Sagamore of the *Mi Ashe Ton Gaxas* of the Bear-Step Clan, horse thieves *par excellence.*

A half century ago, when it was winter in Oklahoma and Jack Frost painted fantastic pictures upon glass windows, a proud youngster was permitted to keep an open fire burning, the pipes well filled, and the coffee ready for three heroes of another era.

The privileged one was looked upon with envy by other youngsters because he was allowed to "sit in," almost within the circle of the "Old Bloods," and to learn their secrets and listen to wild adventure tales of three silver-haired demigods of yesteryear, while they smoked and lived in retrospect the many events that had been crammed into their thrill-packed lives. The voice of the "coffee cooler" was not to be heard—except in laughter at their unique humor—but his ears were well open and his memory retentive enough to reiterate here a few of the pranks played by the three Indian heroes of a bygone era.

There was Heconida (White Horn), the proud Omaha who had served with the Dog Soldiers of the Cheyenne to learn their philosophy and, incidentally, their horse-heisting technique. He was well built and straight as an arrow. His regular features, snow-white hair and unique philosophy branded every inch of him the aristocrat. The many pierces in his ears showed that he had once been a man of great wealth.

There was Otopasco, the Pinal Apache —deep-chested, powerful and silent. His laughing eyes and immobile features made you wonder whether he had the goods on you, or was just glad to be alive.

Then there was Go Don Bear-Step the Cherokee-Comanche, recognized as a great leader by Heconida and Otopasco many, many moons before he became the idolized grandfather of this writer.

There was, indeed, an All-American Indian combination that puzzled most of the people who knew their Indians. It was similar to the dog, cat and raccoon combination—natural enemies getting along together like bread and gravy. It couldn't happen, but it did. And others would say an Omaha and a Comanche could not trespass so far into the Crow, Shoshone, Ute, Piute and Hopi countries without being killed. It couldn't happen, but Bear-Step and Heconida did it.

GRANDPA BEAR-STEP was born of an aristocratic mother, "Cherokee the Civilized." He was taught to speak, read and write in English, Spanish and Sequoia, (written Cherokee). He also spoke Comanche. All through his boyhood days the culture of the Cherokee was instilled in his heart, while the muffled wolf song of the Comanche tormented his soul. So, typical of the mixbreed when the wild goose called, he succumbed to the stifled thirst for adventure in far away places, and the instinct of his Comanche father held sway.

In Montana, where the Big Missouri flows north, he cut an Arapahoe arrow from a young Omaha-Ponca named Heconida, or White Horn, and thus began a life-long friendship. Food was plentiful, and the stinking hide and fur business was no fun. So trading in high-spirited horses led them down the wind from cold winters southward through Ute, Piute, Navajo, Hopi, and the very dangerous Mormon countries.

While retreating from some hot-headed Mormons, they all but overran a Pinal Apache who had also met with Mormon rebuff for his unsuccessful attempt at horse-stealing. Sunrise found the three renegades in hiding together in an ancient ruin of the Verde Valley. Here it was learned that the three of them had much in common; mainly, a great love for good horses, a feeling of appreciation for each other's company, and a limited knowledge of the English language.

So Otopasco, the Pinal Apache strong man, was accepted as third member of the party without ceremony. Here were the waters that had sought and found their own level; here were three exceptional men, each in his own right a skillful pony heister. But what made practical sense, here was a combination of three hellions who, among them, could converse in Omaha, Ponca, Sioux, Cheyenne, Cherokee, Comanche, Apache, Spanish, English, and the universal sign language of all the tribes. Here was condensed the cream of the cunning, skimmed from the aforementioned tribes, and now under the shrewd supervision of a Cherokee with a Great Smoky education and the sure instinct of the Comanche. Here were representatives of three of the greatest tribes of horsemen (and horse appraisers) on earth. They were destined to go places together.

"Mi ashe ton gaxas, stealths of the darkened moon," Heconida translated his native Omaha into English. "We should do well together."

There were no articles of corporation, pledges, or oaths of partnership. Silent mutual nods of approval linked the friendship that never was broken. And it was there, on the Verde River, while

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the three stealths were camped in the cottonwoods near the ancient ruins of Sugarloaf, that the Bear-Step Clan was born.

So the three *gaxas* plied their crafty trade and improved with practice. Vacationing during light of the moon and working seven nights out of the twenty-eight, they enjoyed life and did well. They were wily and alert at all times, and caution was their watchword.

WHITE HORN was the official daytime scout. While Otopasco tended camp and the stolen horses, Grandpa Bear-Step would sit on a high spot and smoke his pipe and keep an eye on both of them. Sometimes White Horn would be miles away, but his signal mirror blinked the message—"strange riders coming." Then Grandpa relayed it on to Otopasco, who destroyed camp evidence and stood by to herd the string of stolen mounts up or down a stream of water to obliterate tracks. If the riders drew uncomfortably close, White Horn would ride almost within their rifle range while pretending not to see them. He made straight, unsuspicious tracks for them to follow, indicating that he would lead them to his camp and their missing horses—but he never did!

Sometimes the riders were too smart to fall for this old trick, and would chase White Horn. But his weapon was the finest of rifles—the Atkinson—and his aim was deadly. And there was no mount in the West to match his broad-chested Nez Perce war horse for speed and endurance. There had been occasions when a vein had been tapped, and the life of White Horn saved from death by starvation and thirst by drinking of the royal blood of the horse with the iron heart, his beloved Appaloosa, Sooloocy, heisted from the Sioux.

The three comrades moved southward through the Yavapai and other Apache countries, where Otopasco, as front man, did well among the scattered tribes of his Apache cousins. Smooth diplomats, they presented chiefs with fine horses and made friends everywhere. The Southwestern tribesmen began to look upon the renegades as gentlemen soldiers of fortune, to be admired and treated with great respect. Young braves became eager to join the wandering horse-hunters, but the three adventurers gently but firmly refused to take on any recruits. Theirs was a tight, profitable partnership and they intended to keep it that way for the present.

For ten years, *Mi Ashe Ton Gaxas* of the Bear-Step Clan were free to come and go among many tribes. They who extended them welcome were amply repaid with excellent horses and other loot. Many dogs were killed to provide feasts in their honor. Tribal chieftains asked that some of their finest young braves be permitted to work with the Bear-Step Clan and become masters of the polished skills of the three Stealths of the Darkened Moon. Grandpa Bear-Step became official *Wathon* of the horse hunt, and his name symbolized the fraternity emblem of the graduated *Gaxa* of the *Mi Ashe Ton,* as selected recruits were finally accepted.

Teaching the Apaches how to steal was like carrying coals to Newcastle, as the cavalryman of the 1850-60 period well knew. But it was the superior Comanche technique that elevated the Apaches from the unimaginative "dry-gulch" hi-jack into the clever Jimmy Valentine category of scientific horse heisting.

EVERY American Indian is born with inherent love for the game where skill is combined with chance, and the stiffer the penalty the more pride he takes in beating the game. No other race has ever had as many gambling games as the Indian. There are more than three hundred that can be played in a basket, with penalties ranging from busted knuckles to a form of Russian roulette. Sometimes more lives were lost in tribal games than in tribal wars. Sequoia, for example, was crippled for life in the game of Cherokee Ball, a sort of "la crosse in the rough." Two-timing squaws were bad medicine then, same as now. The age-old triangle game was risky and rough. Left hands of the two male participants were lashed together, and they slashed it out with knives. To the winner went the spoils—AFTER her nose had been amputated by the virtuous wives.

Horse stealing was the Indian's favorite game. Taking chances on getting shot by one who was clever enough to catch him gave him his greatest thrill. Dying on the battlefield was a great honor, and a happy Hereafter was his who died in that manner. But when the eyes of the gods were dimmed by darkness, the Great Unknown of the *Gaxa* wasn't so certain. Between the gain and the loss, the gap was great indeed. He gambled with his Hereafter. If he were captured by other Indians and tortured, he stood a pretty good chance of getting right with the gods by jeering and tormenting his captors. But getting killed or hanged in the night for horse heisting was exceedingly bad luck, and tribesmen gave the *Gaxa* credit for great bravery in taking such chances.

Heisting was worth the chance. It paid off in excitement, horseflesh and tribal honors rated according to the distance between the actual win and what the brave stood to lose. The hoof print painted on the rump of his horse was the honor mark for which the *gaxa* had staked his life, and won. It was second only to the "pat hand," warpainted symbol of an enemy killed in action and scalped.

Great importance was placed upon the method in which the horse was heisted. According to *Mi Ashe Ton* doctrine, it was bad taste to potshot a rider (not an ememy), and ride away on a captured horse. One could easily vex the gods by killing a person (or any living thing) without having just cause, and making oath and promise beforehand in due and ancient form. Killing a non-enemy was sinful, and doubly so after sundown, or when the eyes of the gods were dimmed with rain, self defense excepted. Grandpa Bear-Step often boasted of having never killed or scalped a man he wasn't mad at because he was above that sort of thing. His statement was usually followed by one from Uncle White Horn who would lift eyebrows at Grandpa, sadly shake his head, and soliloquize, "Those quick-tempered Comanches!"

HEISTING for the thrill of tormenting the enemy became tops in clan honors. Humiliating the army by making off with their mounts without molesting remuda guards, making officers appear ridiculous in the eyes of their subordinates, making infantry out of cavalry troops, gave them their greatest satisfaction. The "Walking Soldier With Spurs" was jeered with distant owl hoots and crow calls, but permitted to live and bring disgrace to his camp. If he slept, his canteen was filled with sand; but they saw to it that he lived to return in humiliation to his comrades. The officer in "Walking Spurs" was made to feel like a one-man parade through an invisible zoo of every rodent with vocal cords, and the "Bronx Cheer" was used in the same salutation then as now. Apprentice *gaxas* were allowed to prac-

Illustration by
Shatka Bear-Step

"The hoof print painted on the rump of his horse was the honor mark for which the Gaxa had staked his life and won."

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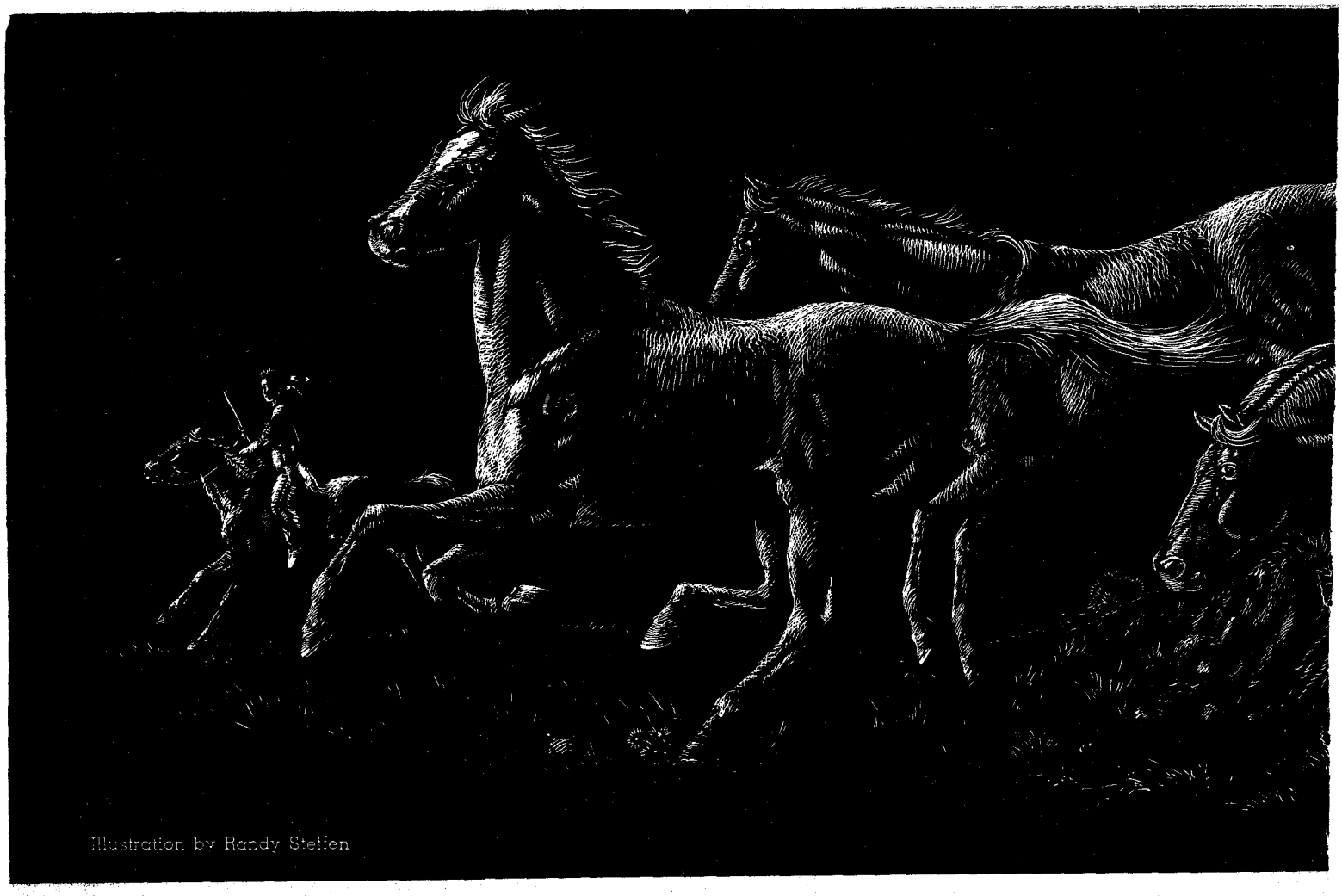

Illustration by Randy Steffen

tice their art of stalking him. Then, from behind boulders and bushes, they would spring out and "BOO!" make faces and "child frighten" him! But they were forbidden to touch the messenger who carried misfortune back into his camp.

The sport of heisting from the whites became rather monotonous, and they found that it was more fun stealing from other tribes. The Indian guarded his mount better, slept lighter and killed the heister just as dead, but quicker. If he were good enough to capture a *gaxa* alive and turn him over to the women for torture, he became a hero, and the *gaxa* was in for a bad time of it. The high-spirited Indian pony had Indian habits, being broken to hackamore, foot guiding and bare-back riding. To the *gaxa,* he was considered a greater honor and better prize than the lazy, oat-fed, heavy-footed cavalry plug, with saddle sores and the disposition of the milk cow.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Indians were pestered by heisters more than the white man, and the unfortunate one usually lost his mount in the same manner in which he had won it. He began to look upon his pony as a prize to be maintained, which he owned to the same extent he would own a branded buffalo. But the honor belonged to the brave who rode the prize mount. He risked his life to gain a trophy, which he guarded with the same enthusiasm a heavyweight champion defends his belt. Uncle White Horn defined the situation with the following quotations: "You may possess, but never own, what the Great Wahkonda has given life. The hide is yours, but the tracks of the living horse, never." This bit of Omaha philosophy may have been first offered in condolence to the brave who lost his prized trophy to a better *gaxa.*

So the horse was the Indian's most treasured gift from the whites. It was the table stake of his most fascinating game, and the cause of most of the tribal wars. Even the scattered Apache cousins were becoming hostile toward each other and feuding amongst themselves over captured horses. The technique of the *Mi Ashe Ton* was backfiring and causing bad blood to flow within one of the strongest and fiercest nations of the Southwest.

A powerful young chief of the Chiricahuas, named Cochise, was regarded as one who could bring all Apache tribes together and put an end to inter-tribal heisting; but it was whispered that he was fraternizing with soldiers and advocating that his followers adopt the humdrum habits and customs of the sodbusting whites. His sub-chiefs and small bands were seceding and renegading from the mother tribe.

The older Apache wise men had no doubt that the tall and good-to-look-upon Chief of the Chiricahuas was a great genius; but it was known that he was handicapped with high principles and a code of decency that was unfitted for one in his high position. It was foretold by older chiefs that someday he would become the victim of his own misplaced confidence in others.

IN the year 1860, the young Chief Cochise bought a bill of goods disguised in a fancy and "decent" wrapper. Predictions of the "old bloods" came to pass. Cochise was seriously wounded under the white flag of truce violated by a greenhorn cavalry officer whose ambition outweighed good sense. Had not Cochise escaped, the amateur soldier would have become a hero, and the defiled truce flag whitewashed for further use.

But such was not the case. The genius of the infuriated Cochise was finally reckoned with at the expense of fifteen thousand white casualties, abandonment of stage lines, ranches, mines and cities, and millions of dollars worth of livestock and provisions. It took six Civil War generals and five thousand troops twelve years of blood, sweat and tears to clean up the mess made in a few seconds by a boy-soldier who defiled the traditional white flag of truce by attempting to use it as a camouflage for the sneak-punch that narrowly missed its mark.

But in 1860, the Great White Father in Washington was having the same trouble experienced by Chief Cochise. His generals and sub-chiefs were likewise seceding and renegading from the mother tribe, and he, too, was being whispered about. Soon he was fighting on two fronts. There was inter-tribal warfare, with blood-brothers slashing at each other, while royal families of the Old World prepared to move in from Mexico. Soldiers he could spare for his Western Frontier twisted his orders and executed them in the manner they chose.

In the succeeding fifteen years the *Mi Ashe Ton* Clan of Bear-Step reached its peak, and roving bands of his graduated *gaxas* captured the finest horses. A small secret society had become a great organization that controlled the horsepower, pride and glory of the Western Frontier, and the finesse with which Apache Stealths did their heisting well rated the high honor marks painted upon the rumps of their excellent mounts.

So, around their open fire, during those sacred minutes when it is neither daylight nor dark, three old cronies sat silently and smoked—and remembered. The "coffee cooler" patiently waited for the inevitable "Do you recollect when —?" The introduction of the bull-session

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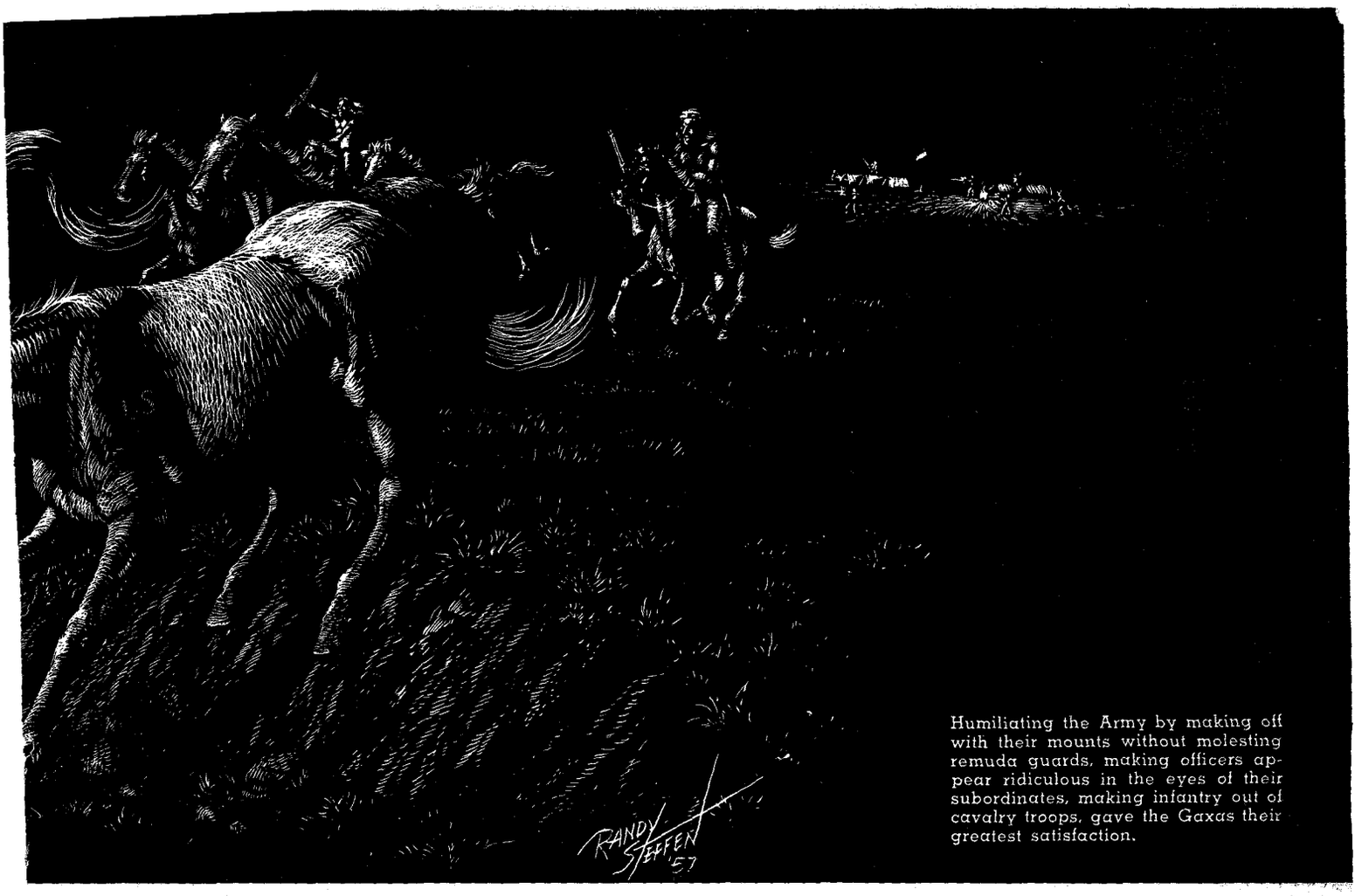

Humiliating the Army by making off with their mounts without molesting remuda guards, making officers appear ridiculous in the eyes of their subordinates, making infantry out of cavalry troops, gave the Gaxas their greatest satisfaction.

to come forth with glowing coals and darkness, and more unique stories from an unquestionable source.

There have been told and written many tales about the Arizona ranchman and frontiersman, Pete Kitchen, who survived Apache raids between 1854 and 1880. There is no doubt that Pete was hit by many marauding bands and renegades, and was plenty bad medicine. The Apache quickly learned that. But the main reason he remained alive was that the Apache respected him, wanted him to live and stay in business. They had little or no love for him but they understood his code of decency. He would give them no trouble if they let him strictly alone. In short, he was a hell of a good neighbor. If they had killed him, his boots would have been filled by one with less common sense than Pete Kitchen possessed. The Apache found early in the game, that his plow-pulling nags were too old to eat and too slow to ride, so were useless to the Indian. They looked upon his kingdom of hams and cabbages as a reservoir to be tapped only in case of total depression.

There was no doubt that Pete was a good shot, because he was a Kentuckian and all Kentuckians are good shots. But Pete was hot stuff in his home state before he went West, where he shot a stalking Apache six hundred yards away. That story came from the Apache side of the fence; so it must have been on the level. But for every Apache Pete saw to shoot at, there were ten he didn't. He seldom, if ever, told about the five-hundred-yard shot through the head of another, but the head was made of adobe and didn't count. An important part of *Mi Ashe Ton* technique was to draw attention, and fire from one direction, while signal mirrors blinked in the other.

CONCEALED within the adobe walls of Pete's corrals were boulders and smaller stones, so it could not be cut with a horsehair lariat. His gate was built of massive timbers and held shut with log chains and brass padlocks which made his horses secure at night. A Mexican sentry created havoc by reporting that a band of Apaches was loading Pete's hog-tied porkers on their ponies and leisurely riding away with them. His boys buckled on their pistols and raced to the corral with saddles and bridles, to give chase to the impudent pig-heisting Apaches. Pete fumbled with his keys and unlocked two of the padlocks; but there was another for which there was no key, placed there by the Apache *gaxas*.

The Butterfield Stage Line threatened the Apache stronghold, and was a sure sign of trouble. If Texas Confederates and war shortages hadn't defeated them, the Apaches would have done it later. Indians of many tribes went for their excellent horses that were purchased on the "Marshall Plan" of that era. Arapahoe, Kiowa and Comanche heisters were riding the iron-shod Butterfield horses and liking them. The canny New Yorker got the idea of using watch dogs in assisting his drowsy Mexican remount station guards. But Indians and dogs have had a mutual understanding for more than three thousand years. In Indian camps were female dogs, some of them in heat. By simply borrowing the bitches' bed blanket and unrolling it on the upwind side of the watchdog, his one-track mind was quickly taken off the sentry business while *gaxas* from the down-wind side plundered the corral.

Mr. Butterfield eventually found an Apache weakness. Someone told him Indians do not ride mules. So here was aspirin for his constant headache. Stolen horses from his remount stations were replaced with young, high-spirited mules. The party who told Mr. Butterfield that Indians don't ride mules was absolutely right. But he should have told him Apaches love to eat them. So his corrals were heisted as usual.

A remount station master was presented with a beautiful hand-woven bridle, a present from the wife of one of his Mexican chore boys. Though she spoke better Spanish than her husband, it was later learned she was Apache, and the bridle was made from the tail hair of the Butterfield mules. It was sent in token for the heisted muleburgers. This was typical of the *Mi Ashe Ton* technique. Frequently a pair of wornout moccasins was left in exchange for a prized horse. The *gaxa* method of poking fun at the loser.

A prominent horseman, whom Grandpa did not like, awoke one morning to find inverted hoof prints painted upon his bedroom window. Rushing to the stable, he found moccasin tracks and a dead jackrabbit hanging from the hitchring of his prize stallion. Almost two years later the unshod stallion was returned to the same stall, gray with wisdom and worse for wear. There were two hoofprints painted upon the same window, one up, one down; one coming and one going. A thorough nosecount in the corral revealed that the old stallion's spirited young offspring was missing. The hoofprint tracking upward was the Indian's honor mark of the captured horse. It was painted upon the rump of his favorite mount and upon the leg of the brave that turned the trick. The inverted hoofprint was the heckle mark, or what the whites called "the Indian

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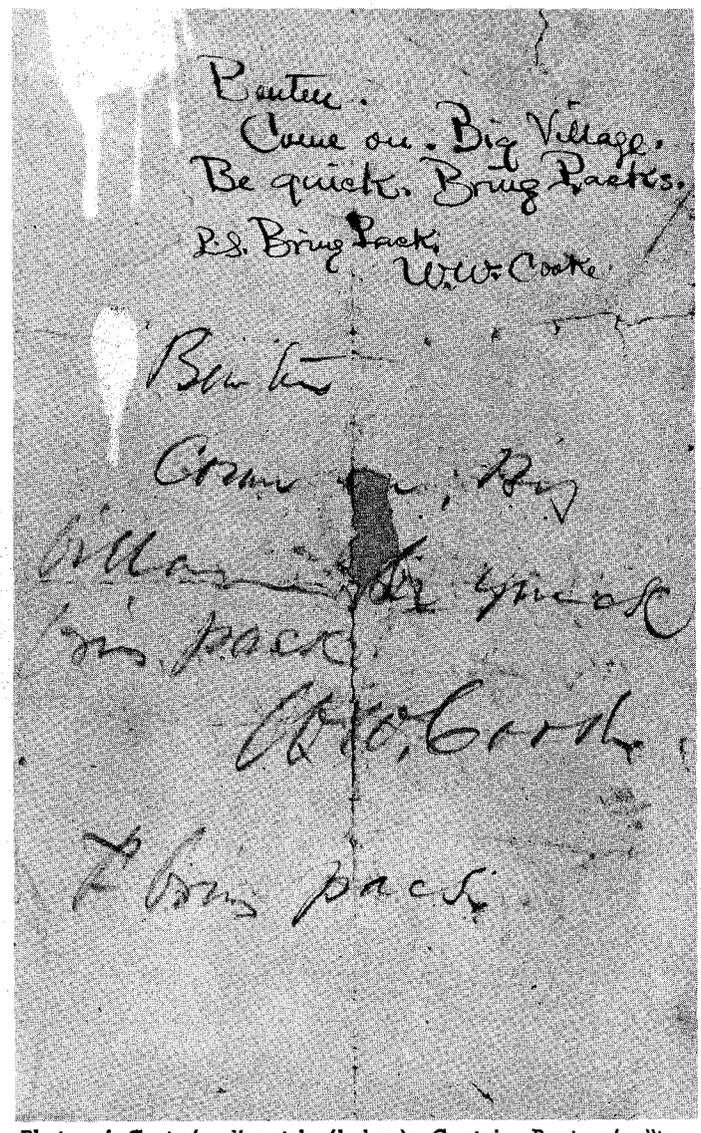

Photo of Custer's dispatch (below); Captain Benteen's "translation" (above).

Lt. Col. George A. Custer, who gained immortal fame in defeat and death.

Like an echo from the thrilling past comes this story of Custer's last message before the battle of the Little Big Horn—a message that was "lost" for many years.

Come On! Be Quick!

BY MILTON F. PERRY

EDITOR'S NOTE: Author Perry, who is Curator of History at West Point Museum at the U. S. Military Academy, writes: "The story of Custer's last message, its disappearance for over half a century and its subsequent reappearance only a few years ago, has never before been published in a nationally distributed magazine except for a fragmentary account in the old *Cavalry Journal*. I feel that the proper spot for this story to appear is in TRUE WEST." M.F.P.

THE afternoon was hot and muggy. A gray, powder-like dust rose in stifling clouds from the horses' hoofs and clung to their riders' skin and clothing. Overhead, a thick layer of clouds stretched from horizon to horizon, diffusing the sun's rays and casting a sickly light upon the dry, vegetation-starved hills. At the foot of one of the hills, a group of cavalrymen, sweating in their dark uniforms, resignedly slapped biting flies while awaiting their commander.

On top of the hill, Lieutenant-Colonel George A. Custer, accompanied by Sergeant John Martin, eagerly surveyed the panorama before him through a pair of field glasses. The most notable feature of the topography was the Little Big Horn River, winding its narrow course between rolling hills and ridges. But it was not the river that interested Custer, for along the opposite bank stretched a great encampment of buffalo-hide tepees. No braves moved between the flimsy structures, and only a few squaws and children could be seen. Even the inevitable half-wild dogs were conspicuously absent from the scene.

Custer turned to his men and waved his hat. "We've caught the Sioux napping, boys!" he shouted enthusiastically.

AT thirty-seven, Custer was one of the best known officers in the Army. Brave and daring, but impetuous, he was at once the darling of the press and a vexing problem to his superiors. His record, though brilliant, left much to be desired. A Brigadier General of Volunteers at twenty-three, he gained many laurels for his dashing exploits during the War Between the States. Given a Lieutenant-Colonelcy in the Regulars after Lee's surrender at Appomattox, he served on the Plains for ten years. During this stormy decade, he had been

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Map of the battle drawn by White Bird, a Sioux warrior.

court-martialed for abandoning a command, invoked the displeasure of President Grant, and had written a book on his varied experiences.

A controversial figure and a discontented and fiercely ambitious officer, Custer hoped on this June 25th of 1876 to regain the favor of his commander-in-chief and of the whole nation by decisively defeating the hostile Sioux in battle. Instead, he was about to go to his death and, in dying, to enter a unique niche in American history and legend.

Rejoining his column, Custer led it to a large ravine that sloped down to the river opposite the village. Here he paused, and called for Sergeant Martin, his Italian-born Orderly-Trumpeter, to return to the rear and guide Captain Frederick W. Benteen's small command and the ammunition train forward.

Before he could gallop off on his mission, Martin was detained by the Regimental Adjutant, Lieutenant William W. Cooke, who was aware of the Italian's poor English. Hastily jotting the message on a pad, Cooke ripped out the page and gave it to Martin. In his haste, he not only held his notebook upside down, but misspelled one simple word:

Benteen. Come on. Big Village. Be Quick. Bring Packs.

W. W. Cooke.

P. S. Bring Pacs

This was the last message of Custer's to reach the outside world.

Martin galloped away, looking over his shoulder as his comrades of Troops C, E, F, I, and L, of the Seventh U. S. Cavalry Regiment, led by the dashing "Boy General of the Civil War," rode down the ominous ravine. Neither Custer or any of his more than two hundred troopers would again be seen alive by white men. Only the order to deliver the message to Benteen saved Martin from sharing their fate.

ON the trail, Martin met Boston Custer. Grinning excitedly, the Sergeant pointed out the direction taken by the five troops of the Seventh. The younger Custer dashed on to join the Colonel and Captain Tom Custer in history.

A little farther along his epic ride, the Italian heard heavy gunfire behind him. From a hill, he saw a horde of Indians on horseback waving and firing rifles. In a valley to his right, amid billowing clouds of smoke and fire, he could barely discern the cavalrymen of Major Marcus A. Reno's small command being assaulted by hundreds of screeching braves. Ducking as several shots were fired in his direction, Martin urged his now wounded mount on in the search for Benteen and the third wing of the triple-pronged force.

On receipt of the message from Custer, Benteen hurried his men forward with the mule train following a short distance behind. As the column rounded a series of high bluffs, it ran into Reno's men in disorganized retreat. At this point, both commands were pinned down by heavy enemy fire. Instead of joining Custer, they dug in on the spot and repulsed several vicious attacks by the Sioux. The besieged troopers could barely hold their ground throughout that long, bitter afternoon, the night following, and the next morning.

One attempt was made to join Custer's beleaguered command that first afternoon. The troopers gained the crest of a ridge from which could be seen, about three miles off, Indians riding in circles and shooting into the ground. Another wild, whooping charge by the hostiles prevented any further advance.

It is extremely doubtful that the combined forces of Benteen and Reno could have saved any portion of Custer's command at this time. Historians estimate that most of the ill-fated Seventh was wiped out within an hour's fighting, and that Custer had begun the battle by charging the village some ten minutes after Martin's departure. Indian accounts of the battle tend to verify this.

None of the men under Reno and Benteen were aware of the annihilation of their comrades until the afternoon of June 27th, when a force under General Terry joined them, frightening off the Indians. Terry's men had seen a large number of strange "white boulders" which, on closer examination, proved to be the bodies of Custer and his men, stripped of their clothing and equipment.

CAPTAIN BENTEEN appreciated the historical importance of Custer's last message almost immediately, showing it to Major Reno, and quoting it in his first letter to his wife after the battle. On March 6, 1879, at the Court of Inquiry which sought to determine if Reno had been guilty of misconduct in not coming to Custer's aid, Benteen gave the message to Robert N. Price, an old Army friend. In the upper right corner, he wrote a "translation" of Cooke's almost illegible scrawl. Unfortunately, neither Benteen or Price ever publicly told anyone of this gift.

For all practical purposes, this date marked the disappearance of the message. Repeated searches for over half a century failed to locate it. Many writers hinted that it never had existed. Once, in the early 1890's, Benteen wrote of it briefly in a narrative account of the battle. But Benteen's paper was never publicized, and it too disappeared for many years. All that historians had to work on were the recollections of those who had actually seen the message.

Suddenly, the message was discovered. Colonel Henry W. Bates, a student of the Custer battle, found it at an auction sale in New Jersey only a few years ago. Instantly recognizing the torn bit of paper as Custer's last dispatch, Colonel Bates deposited it with the U.S. Military Academy at West Point almost seventy years after it had disappeared. Here it will receive permanent preservation.

THE discovery of Custer's last message raises several interesting questions concerning the battle itself. Does the phrase *"big village"* mean that Cus-

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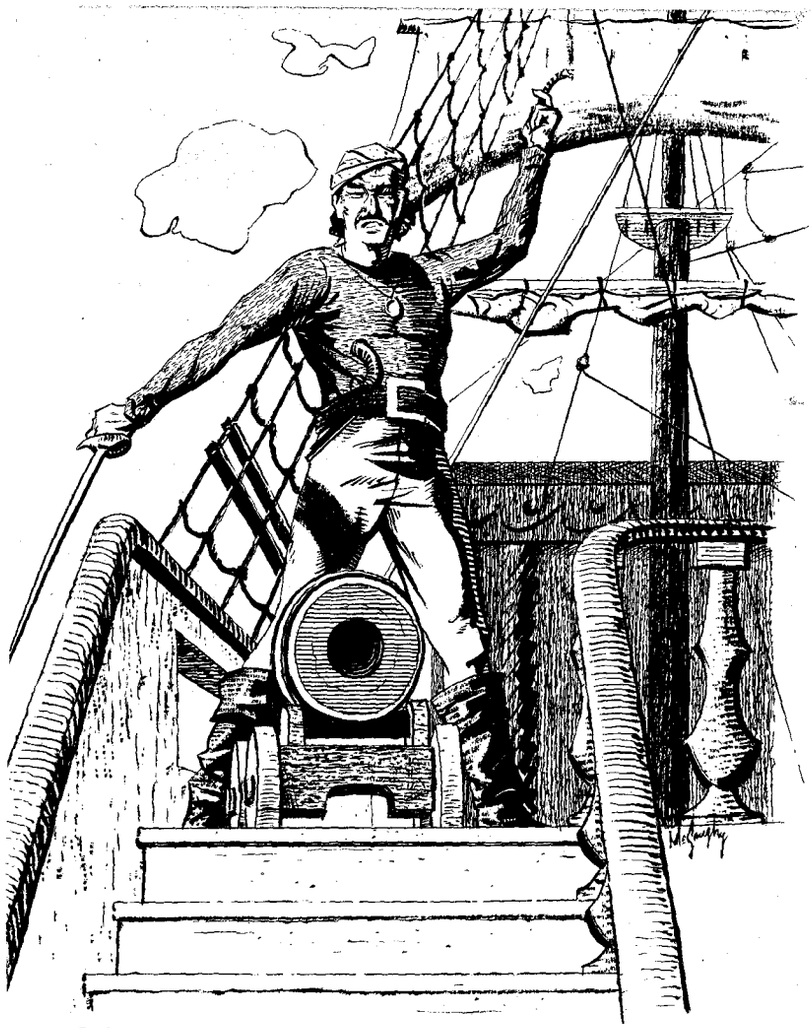

Lafitte laughed and waved the smoldering length of rope he held in his hand. "Surrender, or I fire!"

Today, beneath the muddy waters of a Texas inland lake, lies the

SUNKEN GALLEON SILVER!

BY LIEUT. HARRY E. RIESEBERG

Illustrated by Clay McGaughy

THE slim black pirate craft, in eerie silence, slid slowly toward the armed Spanish merchantman in Matagorda Bay. Jean Lafitte, crouching behind the rail on the afterdeck, saw the grim gray snouts of twenty cannon run out of the *Santa Rosa's* ports. The quarry, alerted to the impending attack, was about to strike first!

"Garde!" yelled the pirate captain.

On the instant, a terrific blast of grape and solid shot crashed through the pirate's ratlines. Above the rattle of musket fire could be heard the voice of the Spanish commander barking orders to his crew. Lafitte watched tensely as his own high-billed bowsprit soared over the merchantman's bulwarks and ripped into her tarred rigging.

"Grenades away!" shouted Lafitte.

Bombs loaded with scrap exploded in the packed ranks of the Spaniards. Blinded, wounded, panic-stricken, with terror, they staggered aft. Lafitte, followed by thirty cutthroats armed with pistols, cutlasses and boarding pikes, raced swiftly along the bowsprit and catheads to board the enemy.

The *Santa Rosa's* master, a tall, gray-haired mariner, stood on the merchantman's poop deck calmly firing his pistols until a pirate bullet felled him. While the buccaneers engaged the rallying Spaniards in a furious *melee* on the maindeck, Lafitte hastily loaded a poop cannon with grape-shot and trained it the length of the Spanish craft.

"Garde!" he shouted again.

The pirates darted to the rails, leaving the bewildered Spanish seamen bunched together in a compact mass on the *Santa Rosa's* stern. Lafitte laughed and waved the smoldering length of rope he held in his hand. "Surrender, *mes amis!* Surrender, or I fire!"

The Spanish crew surrendered.

IN this his last sea fight, the famed freebooter Jean Lafitte plundered from the *Santa Rosa* his last and greatest treasure haul—six wagon loads of pure bar silver. Today, by an amazing twist of events, this huge treasure lies beneath the muddy waters of a Texas inland lake two hundred miles north of Galveston Island, one of Lafitte's old headquarters. A century and a half after the pirate leader looted and sank his last Spanish ship, the *Santa Rosa,* the silver is still there waiting to be reclaimed. The story of how it got there is a strange and fascinating one.

Two months after Lafitte's final *coup,* in the late spring of 1816, one Gaspar Trammell started north en route to St. Louis with the silver. Trammell was Lafitte's most important "fence" or recipient of looted merchandise from his raids. Trammell was a slick operator, with his own strong-arm squad to fight off the hostile Indians and predatory Mexicans that roamed the trails of southwest Texas.

Northward crawled the treasure-bearing wagon train, day after day of slow travel until it neared Hendricks' Lake. Here camp was made, and a guard posted for the night.

In San Antonio, Mexican army officers had been tipped off that the *Santa Rosa* silver was being sneaked out of the country. Two hundred soldiers rode in pursuit of the wagon train to head it off before it crossed the line into Missouri.

On the following morning, as the wagons moved out, a scout raced his horse into camp shouting: "The Mexicans are coming!"

At that moment, the teams were edging their way along the rim of the lake. Trammell hurriedly ordered his teamsters to drive the six covered wagons containing the silver to the rim of the steep embankment, then cut the mules loose from the wagons and allow the vehicles to roll down into the waters of the lake. This was quickly done, and the heavy wagons sank out of sight beneath the surface of the water.

Minutes later, the Mexican soldiers caught up with the wagon train, and a terrific fight ensued. Trammell himself was killed, and most of his band shot down, captured, or driven off into the unsettled wilderness of East Texas. Two of the outfit managed to escape the soldiers, fleeing northward. From one of these men came the story of the sunken silver. Safe in St. Louis, Robert Dawson related the details of the bloody affair on the bank of Hendricks' Lake.

The victorious Mexicans got clear back to San Antonio with Trammell's wagons before they discovered they had been neatly duped. Some bright soldier discovered that there were six teams of mules without wagons or traces in the Gringo train and reported this odd fact to his captain. A frantic search of the

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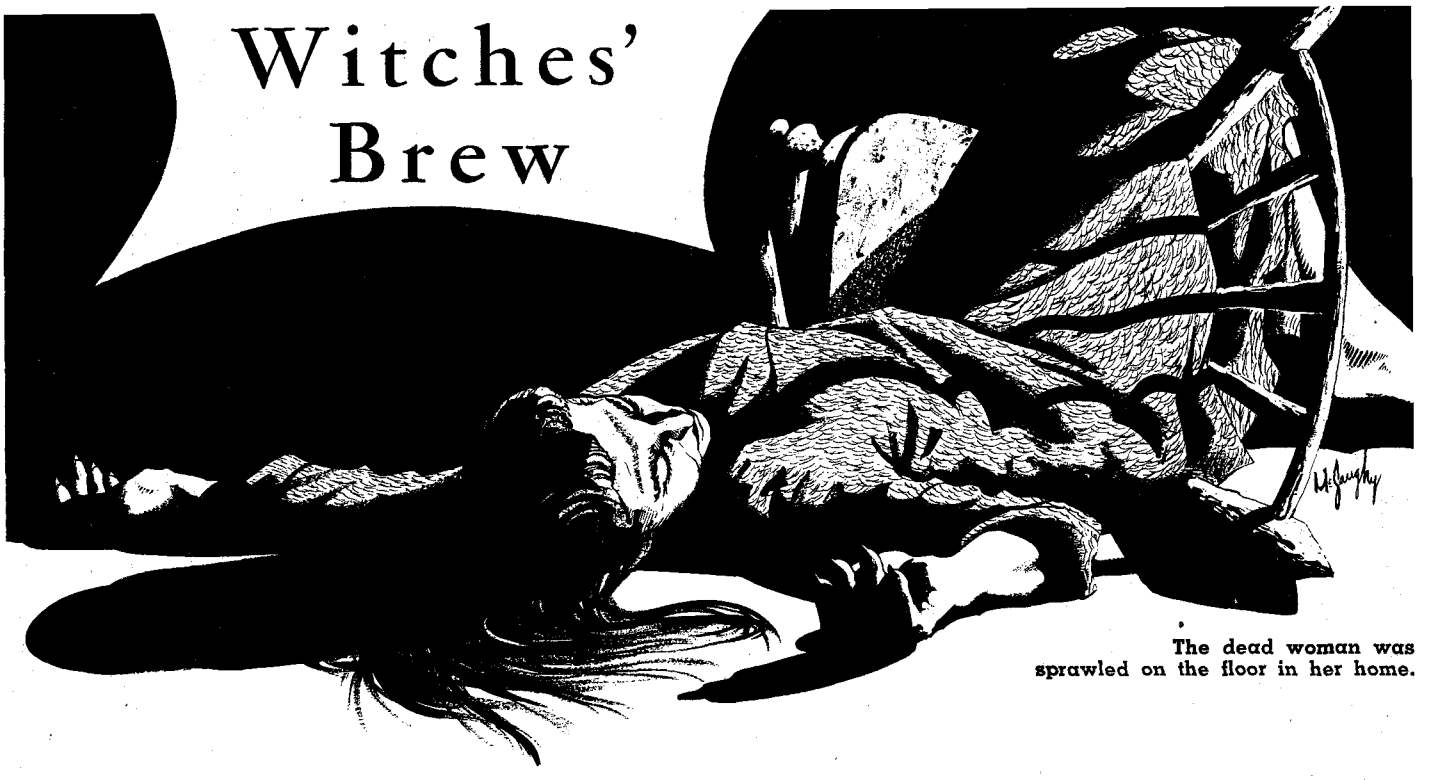
Witches' Brew



The dead woman was sprawled on the floor in her home.

BY MAX EVANS

Illustrated by Clay McGaughy

IF you think witchcraft was solely a product of the dark ages, you have been misled. It is almost as widespread in the Southwestern states as dry summers. A short time back Sheriff Cal Boises was called to the small desert village of Guadalupe, some ten miles north of Phoenix, Arizona.

He found there a case of suspected murder that had weird aspects. The dead woman, Mrs. Maria Estrella Miranda, was sprawled over a chair in her home. Fatal bullet holes were in her neck and arm. The investigators decided that it was a case of revenge murder after they found that diamond rings on the victim's fingers hadn't been touched and that her watch dog had been poisoned the night before.

The first inkling of a motive was discovered in the woman's house. Scattered about were a number of pictures of persons that Mrs. Miranda's husband, Antonio, could not identify. When villagers were questioned they said that the woman, of Yaqui Indian descent, practiced witchcraft and that by certain rituals she could bring about the sickness or death of the people in the pictures.

After investigations by the law and some publicity in the newspapers, a man was picked up who claimed he had a reason to kill the woman. He was a cattle rancher from Mesa, Arizona.

He was quoted as saying, "Sure, I killed her. She was a witch. She sprinkled powder on my wife in 1942 and she started to go blind. Doctors, healers and all the others couldn't help her. I spent a lot of money and traveled many miles trying to get her cured, but she just got worse."

The rancher, jailed without bond, claimed there had been marked improvement in his wife's eyesight since the slaying. His wife told reporters she could distinguish between light and dark for the first time since she had been struck blind.

John J. Flynn, Assistant Maricopa County Attorney, said that first degree murder charges would be filed. At this writing the results of the charges are not known.

Of course, all cases are not this serious. Some witch doctors claim to be able to heal anything from the gout to the seven year itch. The number of followers they have is not recorded, but it is known to be considerable. In fact, some are such firm believers that they refuse to be treated by medical doctors at all.

There are two kinds of witch doctors, the ones who charge a flat fee between two dollars and forty, and those who rely on *gifts*.

ONE woman, who had been ill for seven years and had been confined for a time in an El Paso, Texas, hospital, told of finally consulting a witch doctor. He dusted her nude body with a broom made of cut flowers. After that the woman claimed she was well and hearty.

Some specialize in child birth. The witch doctor smears the expectant mother all over with a mixture of eggs and onions. This is supposed to ease the pain and draw out the baby. A treatment that is popular among the faithful for hangovers or any type of nausea is to rub a hen egg on the patient's stomach, then break the egg, pour it into a saucer and place the dish back of the sick one's head. A potato split down the middle and attached to the patient's head is a sure cure for sinus trouble, according to the witch doctors. The same thing done with beans is supposed to relieve a headache instantly. That might be good advice for those who haven't recovered, as yet, from paying their income taxes.

My own most lasting observation of the practice of witchcraft came about several years ago. A friend, whom I shall call Jack, and I were preparing to go to Raton, New Mexico, on business. I noticed that Jack put a handkerchief in every pocket of his clothing. I asked if he thought he might be going to catch a cold and he answered, "No, my grandmother has a curse on me and I can't keep handkerchiefs. She knows I'm a nervous person and my hands and forehead perspire a lot. I need handkerchiefs to wipe it off, but she sees to it that I'm always losing them."

He went on to say that she had killed his step-grandfather by witchcraft and wanted to drive him insane. I was skeptical, but still after he had said that by night there wouldn't be a handkerchief left on his person, my curiosity was aroused to a high pitch.

I watched every move he made. Each time he removed a handkerchief to wipe his brow, I made sure he returned it to his pocket. I even went to the bathroom with him. That night when we finished our business and retired to our hotel room I asked him about the handkerchiefs. He let me examine every stitch of his clothing and there were none to be found. Not one.

I had been with him every instant and I knew that he wasn't even an amateur magician. I offer no explanation, but that is exactly the way it was.

AS time went on, he became ill quite often. Finally, Jack consulted a witch doctor. The witch doctor advised

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Y'all gather 'round, now! Hush your fuss and keep your ears bent for listening. Here comes a genuine old pot-wrastler with complete and fool-proof advice on how to prepare

SOURDOUGH FIXIN'S

BY MARK TREY

HUNDREDS of thousands of Americans living today have never tasted "sourdough" bread, biscuits or flapjacks. Many more thousands do not even know of such a process of making bread or its equivalent. A large number of people are uninformed or misinformed about the true origin and history of the term "sourdough," and believe that it is merely a nickname applied to Western miners and prospectors. It just so happens that the coinage and currency of this simple term, often applied facetiously today, involves a wealth of typical American folklore of the past, and also a culinary treasure of pleasure which is available today.

Contrary to general assumption, sourdough is not and never was exclusively monopolized by miners and prospectors, nor by any other special element of the far West or Northwest. Sourdough bread, biscuits and flapjacks belong to *all the West.* They helped to develop the West, not only before and during the great gold rushes of California and Alaska, but for many decades afterward.

Sourdough was carried in cooking outfits by the freighters of the early West who hauled supplies to the pioneer settlements, Army posts and mining camps from the nearest railroad town or river town, sometimes hundreds of miles distant.

These old long-line skinners drove twenty head strung out on three wagons through rugged, hostile and uninhabited territory, on journeys which sometimes required weeks, pitching their camps wherever nightfall found them, beside the nearest stream or waterhole.

The rear wagon was equipped with a cabinet on the back, similar to that on a cowboy chuck-wagon, and his cabinet contained—in addition to other cooking paraphernalia—a stone jar partly full of sourdough. The jar was well packed and insulated against the jolting of the wagon, and well protected from dust and extreme temperatures. In fact, this source of the skinners' daily "Staff of Life" was nursed with a tenderness and care almost equal to that which would have been accorded an infant.

At the end of a long day's journey, after the skinner had unharnessed and cared for his whole herd of horses, he prepared his own meal over a campfire on the ground near the cabinet. His culinary implements and utensils were meager, but there was only one item which was important, for his only bread throughout the entire trip consisted of sourdough biscuits baked in a Dutch oven in a pit of live coals.

CATTLEMEN of the Old West carried sourdough in their chuck-wagons or upon pack mules. Prospectors carried it on their burros. In the latter two cases, when carried upon animals, only a "starter" was transported in a glass fruit jar with a screw top slightly perforated for the escape of gases. When the new camp was set up, the sourdough starter was then replenished and the volume increased in a large container.

Many trappers kept sourdough at their headquarters camp and baked enough bread or biscuits in advance to have a surplus for their lunch on long trap-lines.

Sourdough was even preferred by many housewives and permanently stationed ranch cooks—including Chinese—over all other methods of making bread or its equivalent. It was quicker to prepare, far less troublesome, and it produced a he-man, stick-to-your ribs, satisfying morsel with a distinctive flavor and aroma all its own. It was still perfectly palatable after it was cold and several days old. This latter feature was very important to the cooks and very popular with ranch hands, buckaroos, and other outdoor men who were required to carry cold lunches.

And so we find that the much publicized "Sourdough Miner" was not the only duck in the sourdough puddle by any means. Nor is sourdough baking a lost art, despite its apparent obscurity and misconception.

Sourdough products can be enjoyed today by Easterners as well as Westerners, and the former need not subscribe or travel to so-called "Dude Ranches" with all their hocus-pocus and synthetic atmosphere. The art may be adopted and mastered by any competent cook in the most modern city home, but it really is most enjoyed in an outdoor setting, whether in a backyard barbecue patio, picnic grounds, or a hunting, fishing or tourist camp.

Sourdough is a perpetual nucleus maintained by fermentation process very similar to that of yeast dough, but it differs from yeast bread in that it does not require starting from scratch every time. After it is once started to working, it can be perpetuated with very simple material and ingredients that are usually available in almost any kitchen or outdoor camp.

With reasonable care it is always ready and rarin' to go—to the oven. So long as a starter is retained and replenished each time a portion is extracted for baking, it may be used twice a day—early morning and late evening—for making bread, biscuits or flapjacks. It requires several hours for working and maturing between extractions.

If a good baking oven is not available, a heavy cast iron Dutch oven will serve just as well—in fact, even better if used right. Sourdough biscuits and a Dutch oven go together like chicken and dumplings or ham and eggs. Dutch oven baking technique will be fully explained a little later, but now let's start at the beginning of the whole process.

The first requirement—and a "must" with no alternative or substitute—is a stone or glass jar of considerably more capacity than the sourdough will actually occupy at the outset, in order to allow plenty of room for expansion without overflowing. Lively sourdough will expand to double its original volume or more at its peak of activity.

A one gallon jar will take care of the

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needs of from two to six people. A two gallon jar will suffice for most large families or groups, but if an outdoor barbecue party or an extra large group of indoor guests are to be satisfied, the size of the jar should be increased accordingly. It is much better and safer to use a jar that is too large than too small.

DO NOT under any circumstances ever use any kind of metal container or allow the sourdough to contact metal at any stage during the fermentation process. Contact with metal at this time will definitely poison the sourdough and render it unfit and unsafe for use thereafter. After it is removed from the jar, and during the short temporary process of forming the sourdough into loaves or biscuits, and during the actual baking, this rule does not apply. We are referring to active working stage only.

Obviously, most mixing pans, baking pans, and Dutch ovens are made of metal, but during this short period the sourdough is insulated by flour and grease.

Neither should other substitutes for stone or glass be used for the working container. Plastic or wood will not necessarily poison the sourdough but will give it an unpleasant flavor. Granite containers may develop a chipped spot, unnoticed, thereby exposing the raw iron beneath. People will try to tell you that certain substitutes for stone or glass are just as good, but pay them no heed. We want this adventure to be absolutely safe, sanitary and successful.

The stone or glass jar should have plenty of depth, a wide open mouth which provides easy access for stirring and pouring, and a loose-fitting lid,

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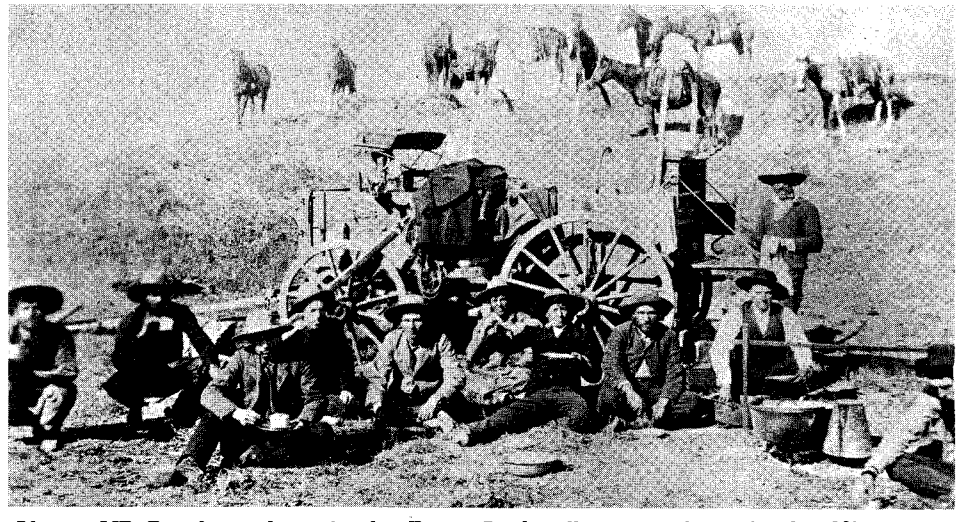
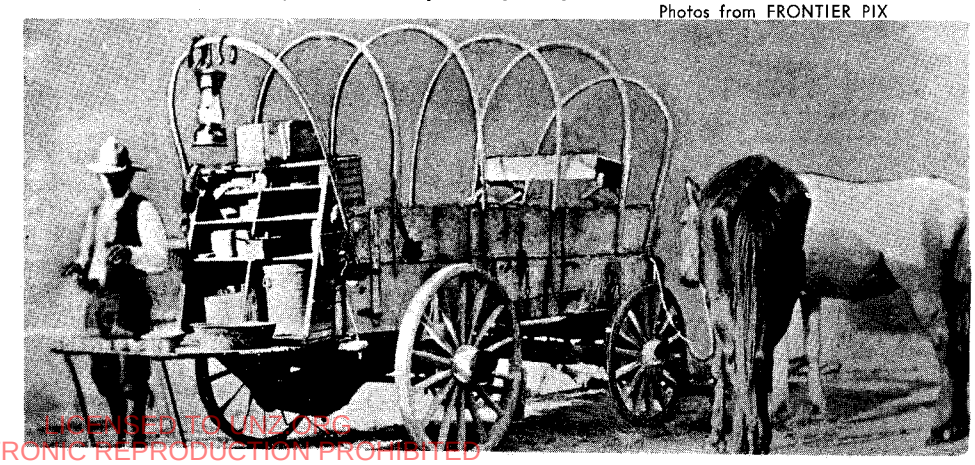


Above: LIT Ranch cowboys in the Texas Panhandle at mealtime in the 80's. Below: This is John Custer's chuckwagon that made three trips up the famous cattle trails to market. Photo made by N. H. Rose while on exhibit at Old Time Trail Drivers Convention, San Antonio, Texas, 1917.

Photos from FRONTIER PIX



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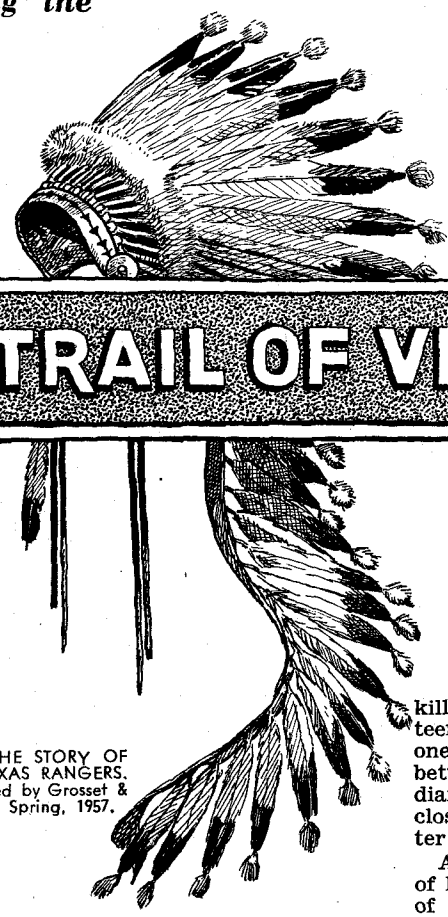
"The scene of the conflict was perfectly horrible," wrote Lieutenant Baylor, of the Texas Rangers, in describing the scene of a massacre on the



LAST WAR TRAIL OF VICTORIO

BY DR. WALTER PRESCOTT WEBB

Illustrated by B. D. Titsworth

From THE STORY OF THE TEXAS RANGERS. Published by Grosset & Dunlap, Spring, 1957.

IT was on August 2, 1879, that Lieutenant George W. Baylor left San Antonio for El Paso, nearly six hundred miles away. Baylor's party consisted of two heavy wagons, a mule-drawn ambulance, and a mounted guard of six Rangers. One wagon carried household goods, including a square piano, a game rooster and four hens. In the ambulance was Mrs. Baylor, her sister, and her two daughters, age eight and fourteen. In the escort was young J. B. Gillett who would later marry one of these daughters. Thus did law and civilization go west. The party was forty-two days on the road, arriving at Ysleta near El Paso in September.

Baylor was forty-seven years old, six feet two in height, and had a fair education. He was a courageous and fearless fighter, but as a Ranger officer he would not rank with either McNelly or Arrington.

Baylor had been in El Paso less than a month when an Indian raid was reported.

The last Apache raids into Texas were led by Chief Victorio, who quit the reservation in New Mexico in the fall of 1879, with 125 warriors and 100 women and children. Victorio's scouts knew the rugged country on both sides of the Rio Grande, knew where the water holes were, and where to find grass for the horses and wood for the campfires. From the candle-like peaks known as the Candelarias, he sent raiding parties into two nations.

Six or seven of his horse thieves stole a herd of ponies from the Mexican village of San Jose. Fifteen Mexicans followed the trail, only to be ambushed by Victorio as they entered the mountains where all were killed. Thirty-five more Mexicans went to see what had happened—all the men in the village of Carrajal—and all of them were killed in the same manner.

Panic ran wild down the border, and the Mexicans sent for the Texas Rangers to join in an all-out effort to drive Victorio and his Apaches away. A mixed army of border fighters took the trail, and came to the pass where the Apaches had ambushed and slaughtered the Mexicans. Baylor described the scene in this letter to his commanding officer, Major Jones.

"The scene of the conflict was perfectly horrible. I saw in one little narrow parapet, which the . . . Mexicans had hastily thrown up, seven men piled in a space 6 x 7 feet. The Indians had shown great cunning as they have all through this campaign. The trail passed between, and was commanded by, three rocky peaks. The Mexicans were fired on from one side just as they reached the crest of the mountains. They had evidently dismounted and ran into the rocks on the opposite side when the Indians began killing the horses . . . They were all killed. A letter written by them asking for help was found outside their breastwork near the body (bodies) of two men who had evidently attempted to escape but were riddled with balls."

Twenty-six bodies were buried at this place. Victorio and his Apaches had disappeared in the Mexican mountains, and pursuit was without result.

VICTORIO'S raids continued until October 14, 1880, when General Terrasas attacked Victorio in Chihuahua, killed the chief, sixty warriors and eighteen women, and took sixty-eight prisoners. Three months later, the last fight between the Texas Rangers and the Indians brought the curtain down and closed forever the long and bloody chapter of Indian wars.

After Victorio's death, what remained of his band scattered, and at times some of them were reported in Texas. Early in January of 1881 they attacked the stage in Quitman Canyon, killed the driver and a gambler who was a passenger. Major Jones wired Baylor to investigate and on January 16, Baylor set out on the last Indian campaign. From Quitman Canyon the Indians fled south into the Big Bend and crossed into Mexico at the Hot Springs. On the trail the Rangers found the gambler's kid glove, the stage driver's boot top, a pair of moccasins, blankets, saddles, and baskets, two dead horses and a dead mule. The Indians had killed these animals for food, had drawn the blood in vessels, and left a mule tongue stewing when they fled. They left a five gallon can of *mescal,* an alcoholic drink made from native plants, and fifteen gallons more in a horsehide sunk in the ground. The Rangers followed the trail toward Eagle Mountains, found it, lost it, found it leading on to Chili Peak, Rattlesnake Springs, to the edge of the Sierra Diablos or Devil's Mountain.

Flying doves told that water was near, and they knew the Indians could not pass water in a dry country. The Rangers made a dry camp, without water, fire, or food. Before daylight January 29, 1881, the Rangers set out on the trail, which led north over a rocky crest from which the campfires could be seen below.

The Rangers came within gunshot without being discovered. The Indians were just getting out of bed and the sun was just beginning to show over the

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Six or seven of his horse thieves stole a herd of ponies from the Mexican Village of San Jose.

distant mountains. They knelt in hiding and took dead aim to send the leaden bullets among the Apaches. The Indians made no resistance, but each ran for himself. As the warriors went first, the women and children suffered most. A squaw and two children were captured. The woman and the smallest child, a mere baby, were wounded. Nevill reported that everytime the baby heard a gunshot it would scream. Why not? Since men and women all wore blankets, it was impossible to tell one from the other. Baylor said that under the law governing the Frontier Battalion, it was not necessary to make any distinction.

The Rangers killed four warriors, two women and two children, and wounded many more. They captured seven mules, nine horses, two Winchesters, one Remington carbine, a U.S. Cavalry pistol, six cavalry saddles, an American saddle, a Mexican saddle, and 150 yards of calico. The Rangers piled such Indian plunder as they did not want to keep, including packsaddles, and built a bonfire on Diablo Mountain to celebrate their victory and the end of an era.

HERE also the Rangers put new fuel on the Indian campfire and made breakfast. That meal was described thus by Captain Baylor. "We took breakfast on the ground occupied by the Indians, which all enjoyed as we had eaten nothing since dinner the day before. Some of the men found horsemeat pretty good while others found venison and *mescal* good enough. We had almost a boundless view from our breakfast table: toward the north the grand old Cathederal Peak of the Guadalupe Mountains; further west the San Antonio Mountains; the Cornudas, Las Almas, Sierra Alta; at the Hueco Tanks, only twenty-four miles from our headquarters, the Eagle Mountains. The beauty of the scenery (was) only marred by man's inhumanity to man, the ghostly forms of the Indians lying around."

This celebration on the lofty mountain overlooking the mysterious desert could be packed with symbolism. The place was the Devil Mountain, a place where an era ended centuries of war between the white man and the red. The coffee the Rangers drank that morning might have gagged less hardy men, for in it was mixed the blood of the last Texas-slain Indians. The camp was by two little water holes, and the killed and wounded Indians had left their blood in the water. As is often the case in war, the toast to victory is nearly always laced with blood. But the Indian wars were over.

Shortly after Baylor's Rangers returned from the expedition into Mexico after Victorio, some of the men were camped about one hundred miles east of El Paso. One day two mining engineers, J. P. Andrews and W. P. Wisehall, drove into camp. They were on the road from Colorado to San Antonio and made inquiry of the Rangers as to the best route they should take to the next settlements which were on the Pecos seventy-five miles to the east. The engineers had a new ambulance, drawn by good horses, a fine saddle horse, and the best firearms. What interested the Rangers most, however, was a beautiful shepherd dog, well-trained to obey his master.

Against the advice of the Rangers, the engineers followed the old Butterfield stage route which led by Hueco Tanks, Alamo Springs, the Cornudas and Crow Flats. Along this trail fragments of Victorio's Apaches were lurking, lying in wait for just such travelers.

The engineers made it to Crow Flats and were camped in an abandoned stage station where the Apaches found them and drove off their horses. They were afoot seventy-five miles from the Pecos settlements, one hundred miles west to the Rangers at Ysleta.

They tried for the Pecos. To deceive the Indians, they rigged up two dummies and left them "on guard," and to give the place the appearance of being inhabited, they left the dog, knowing that he would sound the alarm when anyone approached the camp. Providing the dog with water, side bacon and a sack of corn, they ordered him to stand guard, and set off early in the night. Daylight found them twenty-five miles away in the Guadalupe Mountains. Here they were attacked by the Apaches. By taking refuge in the peaks of the mountains, the engineers stood off the Indians all day, but as night approached, they knew they could not last much longer.

THEY escaped by one of those strange incidents that occur when men are ready to act quickly when an advantage appears. One Indian had approached very near and concealed himself behind a boulder. It was about dark when the watchers saw a thick mop of hair appear over the boulder. When the rifles cracked, the Indian went down, the boulder was dislodged, and started rolling down the mountain, thundering against other boulders, crashing through cedar, opening an unexpected way of escape. The engineers ran after the boulder, by the trail it left, by the kicking warrior, and into the night. By daylight they were back at the stage station where they found the dog still on guard.

The fifty mile walk had worn out their shoes and left the men exhausted. They rested, ate, and discussed what they would use for shoes on the hundred mile walk to El Paso. The only thing available was some gunny sacks. They

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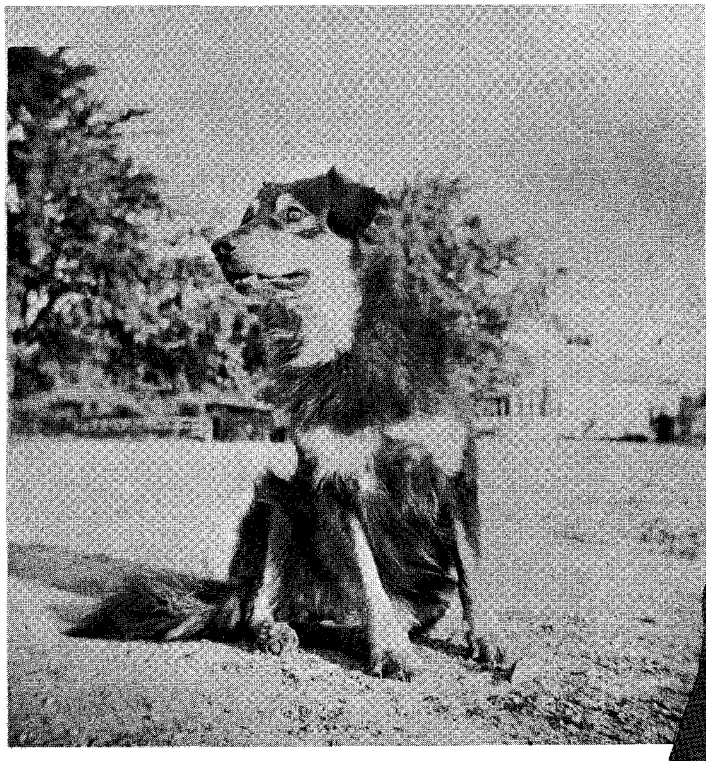

Pepper Joe—Brag Dog.

When it comes to handling bad cattle in timber, one good dog can accomplish more than four or five of the best cowhands that ever straddled a saddle. Here a Trinity River cowman tells about his

BRAG DOG

BY TERRY SANDERS

I'M a cowdog man. Don't get me wrong; I love a good horse. I'll drive hundreds of miles to a calf-roping or a cow-cutting contest and enjoy every minute of it. But when it comes to getting cattle in the pen, any old plug horse will do as long as I have a pair of good cowdogs.

Reckon I'm a cowdog man by inheritance. My grandfather, Bruce Coates, and my uncles, Ray and Little Bruce, ran longhorns in the Trinity River bottom south of Kerens, Texas, for years. They had learned early in the game that the best cowhorse in the world can't keep up with a wild cow in the postoak timber. That is, not if the rider wants to stay on his mount.

Cowdogs were essential to my grandfather and my uncles. They kept "find dogs" to locate and trail wild cattle, "drive dogs" to herd them, and "ketch dogs" to catch and throw the rough ones.

Little Bruce tells of the time old Jackfire, a hound-shepherd cross, jumped a renegade steer on a hillside near the Cottonwood Thicket. The steer, a fat, brown longhorn about ten years old, headed for the bottom with Jackfire and a couple of half-grown pups close behind.

For four hours, Bruce and Ray skirted the edge of the bottom, hoping the dogs would bring the steer out so they could rope him. At noon they went back to the house and released a fresh pair of dogs. When the new dogs joined the chase, Ray blew on his cowhorn, calling off Jackfire and the pups.

All afternoon the struggle went on, with the steer trying to lose the dogs in the tangle of mud, poison oak and tallow weed. Finally, just before dark, the dogs brought him out on Bird Prairie where one of the boys got a rope on him.

Bruce had a pit bulldog that he used as a "ketch dog." Bruce and Ray were trying to up-grade their cattle with good bulls about that time, and they had a Durham bull that was bad about breaking into cornfields.

One day this bull jumped a field near the house. Bruce whistled for Brownie and walked out to the edge of the field. He pointed the bull out to the dog, and Brownie took off. The bull bolted just as the dog got to him, so Brownie didn't have a chance to grab his nose. He jumped for the bull and fastened onto the root of his tail.

The old bull lit out down the corn middle with the dog swinging out behind him like a flag. As Bruce tells it, "Brownie's hold started slipping, and he slid down that tail an inch at a time—and that old bull bawled twice for every inch he slid! That bull got plumb educated right then and there. After that, ten cowboys couldn't have put him back in that field again."

I always loved to hear the tales about "find dogs" and "ketch dogs," but the yarns that appealed to me most were the ones about the English shepherds that Bruce and Ray kept to drive cattle. They had four or five of these wonderful shepherds most of the time; shaggy black-and-tan or black-and-white dogs, with broad, short heads and more brains than most men.

When the boys moved a herd cross-country, they always took along two or three of the shepherds. If a steer broke away from the bunch, the cowboys just kept riding. One or more of the dogs would heel the steer before he got far. Usually, heeling was all that was necessary to bring him back into the herd; but if he kept going, the dogs stayed with him, nipping his hind legs every step he took. That gets to be mighty discouraging to a steer after a spell, and he soon decides that the safest place to be is right back in the middle of the herd.

One spring, a flash flood caught a sizeable bunch of the Coates' cattle in the river bottom. Instead of heading for the hills, they climbed up on the first knoll they came to, and stood there bawling while the water got deeper and deeper.

Little Bruce hauled a rowboat to the edge of the water in a wagon. He put three English shepherds in it and rowed around until he located the cattle. Then he threw the dogs into the water and started for shore. The dogs swam from cow to cow, nipping tails, hips, backs, anything they could get hold of. One old cow started after the boat, and soon the whole bunch was swimming for safety. The dogs stayed behind them until every one was ashore.

FINALLY the open range was fenced and plowed, planted in cotton and corn. When people quit raising cattle they no longer needed cowdogs; so, by the time I came along, the

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great English shepherds were only a memory in my territory.

Then, nearly twenty years ago, the country began to change again. The land was too worn out from row-cropping to make much cotton or corn, and the price of cattle began to edge upward. Men in overalls became a rarity on the street; instead, one saw cowboys in blue jeans and big hats. We were living in cow-country once more.

Like just about everybody else in the area, I bought a little bunch of cattle. That's when the trouble started! Seemed like it didn't make a bit of difference how gentle a cow was; when I turned her into the pasture, she got real independent. After a few days in the blackjack and postoak thickets, the gentlest cow decided that she could dodge a rider indefinitely —and she generally could.

Figuring that faster horses was the answer, I got quarter horses. They helped a lot when we had cattle in the open, but weren't worth a damn at getting cows out of the woods.

At this point, I would have given my eye-teeth for a pair of English shepherds like granddad had told me about, but I didn't know where to find them. The American Kennel Club didn't register any such breeds. None of the dog magazines mentioned them.

Then, one lucky day, I spotted an advertisement in a farm magazine. Tom Stodghill, of Quinlan, Texas, was advertising "Genuine, old-fashioned, black-and-tan English shepherds.

I had a letter in the mail before dark, and it wasn't many days until the expressman set a dog crate on my back steps. I opened the crate door, and out ambled a gawky three months old black-and-tan pup. I didn't know it at the time, but that lanky pup was to become my "brag dog."

I named him Pepper Joe. When he was five months old I took him to the pasture for the first time. Carrol Thompson and I were going to catch a couple of horses and ride over the place, and I thought it would be a good time to introduce Joe to some livestock.

As soon as we located the horses, we saw that something was wrong. They were milling around in a corner of the pasture; when they saw us, they headed for the woods. One of my best colts was limping badly. She had been in the wire, and the smell of blood had excited the others.

I wanted to catch the colt, for it was worm season; but couldn't get close to her. We followed the horses into the woods on foot, trailing as best we could by the occasional hoofprint or splash of blood on the leaves.

Within a few minutes we noticed that Joe had his nose to the ground, trailing the colt. He stuck to the trail for forty-five minutes before we caught up with the horses and got them into a corner. Without Joe, it would have taken us hours.

SOON after that I sold my cattle, so Joe didn't have a chance to work until he was a year old. Joe Baxter and his dad had a bunch of cattle in a pasture near Baszette, and I went out one morning with Baxter to pen them. We were both riding green-broke colts, and we carried Joe and a six month old pup called Yap.

The corral was in the worst possible place—on top of a hill, with no fence or wing leading up to it. Baxter told me he had one blue roan cow that had been in this pasture two years. They had never been able to pen her in this corral.

We left the dogs in the pickup and rode until we found the cattle—about thirty-five head. The blue cow was with them. We moved the bunch along slow and got them up to the corral without much trouble. Getting them into the pen was a different story! That cussed blue cow broke away every time we tried to force her through the gate, as the colts just couldn't handle fast enough to put her in.

After about two hours hard work, we had all the cows except eight in the pen. It looked as though we'd have to get older horses to put those in, so Baxter finally agreed to let me try my untrained dogs.

We opened the end-gate and let them out. I pointed to a cow and yelled, and Joe and the pup built to her. They carried her around the corral and in the gate as though they had done it a thousand times. The minute they got to the gate, they stopped and picked out another cow. They made nine trips around that corral, and put in eight cows—all in about ten minutes. The blue cow went in just like the rest.

That was about four years ago. The old blue cow didn't go into the corral again until about two months ago, when Joe Bob Ivey, my partner, carried Heeler, our young stud, and Fannie, one of our brood females, out to Baxter's pasture and penned her again.

It didn't take long for news of my dogs to get around. Pretty soon, any of my friends who had wild cattle to pen wanted to use them. Just about any old bunch-quitter that will ignore a man on a horse will head for the middle of the herd after he has been heeled a time or two; so the dogs built quite a reputation. I took Joe out, sometimes by himself, sometimes with another dog, and he always penned the cattle without any trouble.

That is, he didn't have any trouble until the Brahma bull got into the Bain pasture.

Bob Bain was riding fence one morning, when he noticed that a big black Brahma bull had jumped into his pasture. The Bains raise whiteface cattle, so Bob figured he'd better get the bull out of there. He eased up toward the bull and waved his rope. The bull stood there and pawed. Bob moved in a little closer and the bull charged.

The colt whirled, but he didn't quite make it. The bull caught him square in the side, and set him over about six feet. He lit running and got safely away.

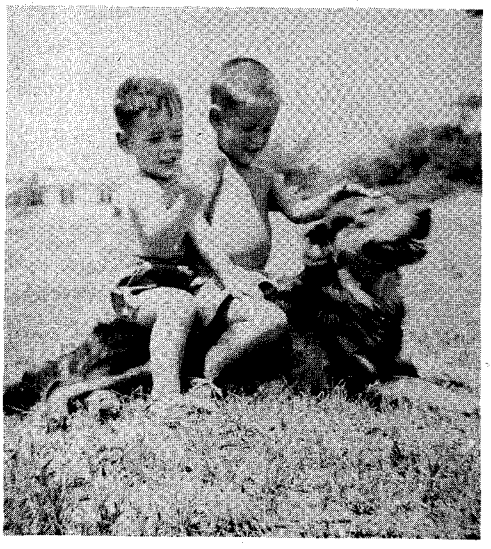
THAT afternoon, Bob and I went back to the pasture with four dogs; Joe, a heeling little female named Coon, and the two best seven month pups I ever owned, Black Gal and Patsy. Ellis Rhynes had been using the pups every day. They were lean as hounds and in top shape. Coon had been sick, so we knew she wouldn't be able to work long. Joe had been lying around the yard in town, and was fat and soft.

When we reached the pasture, we found that two more Brahma bulls had joined the first one. We set the dogs on the newcomers, and they put them out of the pasture in a hurry. Bob and I started congratulating each other; it looked like the job was about over.

We rode up as close to the black bull as we dared, and told the dogs to take him. They went at his hind legs, the way they were bred to do, and the old bull launched a kick

(Continued on page 41)

Left: Heeler, owned by Cowdog Kennels. He works cattle as quietly and efficiently as a Border Collie works sheep. Center: Amigo has been replacing two cowhands since he was nine months old. Owned by Bob Baines, shown with him. Right: Bruce and Kent Sanders on Pepper Joe.



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Wild Old Days

EDITOR'S NOTE: Back in the hectic days when TRUE WEST was just getting started, we went 'way out on a limb and accepted batches of these short-short yarns. We've never found space to print 'em, and we never will—UNLESS we run two or three in every issue from now on until they're plumb used up. Sort of lump 'em all together, regardless of editorial content. So here goes our first string—and we hope you like 'em.

LILY OF THE GOLDFIELDS

BY J. M. HEGAN

THE lively, lilting strains of "The Girl I Left Behind Me" were hardly appropriate for a dirge. But in the limited repertoire of the band of Virginia City's Hook and Ladder Company, there was nothing more suitable. Down C street solemnly marched the fire laddies, their helmets under their arms, bearing the body of Julia Bulette, lady of easy virtue and also their beloved mascot.

Only a few days before, Julia had accompanied the firemen to a conflagration, manning the brakes and applying the pumps of the engine with the best of them. Even now, the very banner which fluttered over the fire-wagon that led the way to the cemetery on Sun Hill where she was to be buried, was the handiwork of Julia's capable fingers.

Yes, the firemen loved their Julia, tall and slender as a reed; kind, impulsive Julia of the rasping cough but heart of the precious metal for which the Comstock Lode was noted.

"Julia's skin may be scarlet, but her heart is white," the fire lads had often observed. For had she not nursed them through illness, cooked their meals, even darned their socks? Little mother of the Hook and Ladder Company she was; yet pal and big sister too, if one may overlook the incestuous implications.

The eyes of the firemen were dimmed and their heads bowed with sorrow. Yet commingled with their sadness was a deep, smoldering anger. For their beloved Julia had been murdered—strangled in cold blood—possibly by one of her own clients. She had been found in her little "pill-box" on D street, Virginia City's "line." And absent with her soul were her precious jewels, her furs and her silks. The marks of the assassin's fingers were still on her throat.

But then Julia's role had been a perilous one before a dangerous audience. And the dramatic unities of time, place and action were against her. The greed for gold had brought to Virginia City men of all degrees of society, and in the fierce struggle for wealth even those of sterling worth were often levelled to the common denominator of the brutes about them.

Little dreamed the two ignorant prospectors, O'Reilly and McLaughlin, in 1859 when they washed out $300 worth of gold dust that they had struck the precious vein of the twenty-million dollar Ophir mine, destined to place the name of Virginia City in gold and silver letters on the map of the world for at least two decades. The same Virginia City which later created the over-night millionaires; Mackay, Hearst, Fair, Stewart and Jones.

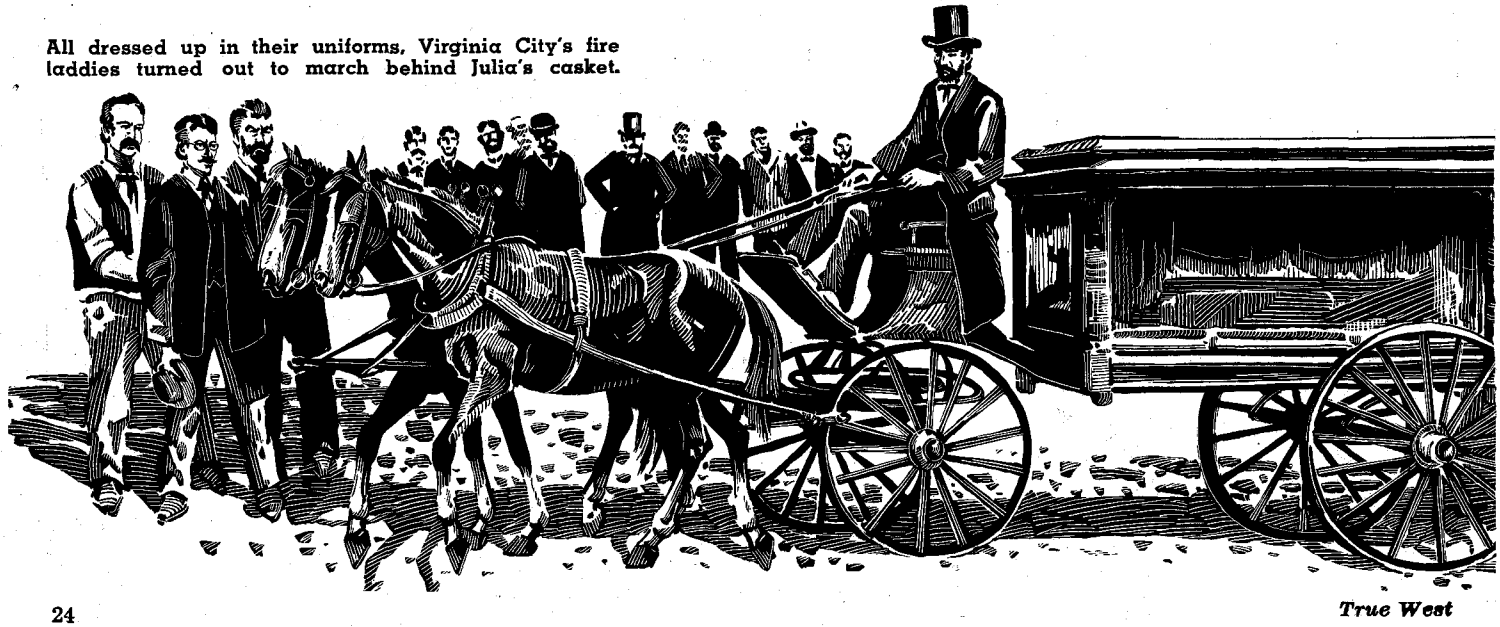
But not for long was the blundering discovery of the two Irishmen a secret. From all over the world they came—criminals, clergymen, cowboys, bankers; Chinese and Mormons; Jews and Gentiles. Even an obscure newspaper man named Samuel Clemens could not resist the lure of a lifetime, and he joined the staff of the *Virginia City Enterprise*. But he was destined to find his gold elsewhere later as Mark Twain.

A mere mining dump soon became a thriving community. Business and residence thoroughfares were soon laid out—A, B and C streets they were named. Then to them was added a fourth—D street and this lane became the established district for the glamorous ladies of the world's oldest profession—the newest for Virginia City at that time.

THE business of the women of easy virtue flourished. Their's was a commodity which enjoyed a steady market. The miners paid liberally for their produce. In one of the row of white cubicles lived San Francisco Bella, formerly of Barbary Coast's notorious Bella Union. In other shanties dwelt Broncho Till, Gorgeous Georgie, Magnificent Maizie and other gilded lilies of the fields of gold.

The directories of the day listed them as dressmakers, foreign language teachers and similar euphemistic titles. Miners liked to tell newcomers the story of one of the early residents of D street. Crazy Kate, they called her because of her eccentric habits, and she was known as a seamstress. One night as she was administering to the dressmaking wants of a client, the latter elected to smoke his pipe.

All dressed up in their uniforms, Virginia City's fire laddies turned out to march behind Julia's casket.



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"Give us a light, will you, Kate?" came his lazy request. Whether Kate's subsequent action was merely an eccentricity or raging jealousy over the miner's interest in his pipe is not recorded.

"Sure, I'll give ye a light!" she replied and obligingly hurled the coal-oil lamp in his direction. The miner got his light, but it cost Virginia City $10,000,000. The consequent conflagration destroyed 2,000 buildings and 160 acres! Such was the tempo of the times.

But this is the tale of Julia Bulette, once a prosperous resident of D street. Perhaps Julia's love for the fire department masked a greater ardor for personal appearances in public. It has always paid to advertise and it could do the fire lassie no harm to appear before myriads in dashing fire costume and helmet. A striking, attractive figure she was indeed! Perhaps this was early ballyhoo.

Regardless of her motives, Julia was the darling of Virginia City's Engine Company No. 1 and its honorary member. And today they were mourning her death!

And so after they had buried her mortal remains on Sun Mountain, and in quick step marched down the hill to the strains of "The Girl I Left Behind Me," not one of the band but swore vengeance for the murder of their beloved mascot —if the murderer could be found.

Now divine retribution occasionally has a strange manner of manifesting itself outside of the pages of fiction. One year after the passing of Julia, a citizen offered some of her effects for sale. The man was immediately seized, tried and found guilty of her murder. Now, on the highest, narrowest and most dangerous point of the Geiger Grade, which leads into Virginia City, is a plank or two which projects over the yawning chasm, a parachute's jump to the distant bottom below.

Should you chance to be traveling—as once we did—near this spot in the highway, and should you encounter a bus going in the opposite direction, courtesy of the road demands that you back off the narrow one-way pass and park on the trembling planks. The prospect of the bottomless below is like a glimpse over the edge of eternity.

Appropriately enough, it was there where they hanged the murderer of Julia Bulette.

Illustrated by
Al Martin Napoletano

WHO KILLED THE LAST BUFFALO?

BY W. J. RICE

A good many years before he became president of the United States, Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt held, for a short time, the reputation of having killed the last buffalo on the American continent.

Charlie Ferris, foreman on the Theodore Roosevelt cattle ranch, which is located on a branch of the Little Mission River, tells about it.

Ferris says the incident took place in the spring of 1882, right after the extermination of the last great herd of buffaloes in Dakota (North and South Dakota still being all in one state) and the simultaneous completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad. A lot of men, bent upon stock-raising, migrated to that part of the country, and among them was young Roosevelt, about twenty-five years old at the time.

"Ted," as he became known to his neighbors, was just about as green as greenhorns came in those days, but soon proved himself likeable enough. That was because he never complained when some of the rough and tough ones of Billings County made sport of him. He'd drink their raw, fiery whiskey when they invited him to, merely grin when some gunman emptied a six-shooter into the floor between his feet, and ride, or "ride at," any sort of fool pitching horse he was called upon to mount.

This was the sort of spirit admired by the old-timers. On top of that, young Ted could outshoot just about any of them, which was an accomplishment to gain a man respect anywhere in those days.

Ted liked to hunt. Antelope, wolves, coyotes, grouse—he was always out after such game and bringing in plenty of it.

One afternoon, he came in packing back of his saddle a buffalo hide and a good big chunk of loin.

"Look what we've got for supper," he called to Henry Britt.

Britt was at first surprised, then disgusted. "Damn, Ted!" he exclaimed. "What'll you do next?"

"What's wrong?" Roosevelt demanded.

"Why, confound it," Britt exclaimed, "you've just killed the last buffalo in America!"

Roosevelt was concerned. "Why, I didn't know—"

"Guess you couldn't," the other said. "Guess nobody ever thought to tell you. Guess nobody ever figured you'd hunt that far off from camp. Must be better than twenty mile to where that last old bull's been ranging."

Then he told young Roosevelt about this old bull that had somehow escaped the big slaughter and how, since then, nobody, not even an Indian, had wanted to kill him. It would have to be the old renegade's luck that some ignorant tenderfoot would come along and lay him low.

About that time another native came up and got pretty riled at what Ted had done. "Why," he charged, "we might have got another start of buffalo, if that fool tenderfoot hadn't shot this last one!"

Britt, however, pointed out that it would likely take something more than one old buffalo bull to start a new herd, so they let the matter drop. They roasted the meat and ate it, figuring it'd be the last buffalo meat man would ever eat.

As it turned out, of course, they were wrong. During the early eighties, a couple of young French-Indian breeds, Allard by name, had decided that the buffalo was doomed, and they set out to raising some. By 1904, their herd numbered 110 head. A few years later, another herd of 200 was discovered at Great Slave Lake, in Canada, and was preserved by the Canadian government.

So, whatever particular, if dubious, glory may be attained by the man who brings to extinction any species of animal, Roosevelt didn't get it.

He just thought for a while that he had.

BATTLING BULLS

BY RALPH HADLEY

THE bull fight fans of Juarez were jubilant; this contest between bulls was to be a novelty, something unique, the like of which had never before been seen in the bull rings of old Mexico. Here, on the sanded floor of the arena, long-horned fighters with blood lines reaching back to Spanish bulls of five hundred years ago, were to be pitted against an alien—a monster bull with gray, dust-colored hide and with long ivory tusks instead of horns—a gigantic bull elephant.

Smooth promoters among the sporting gentry had talked the North American circus man into loaning his big elephant for this unusual contest, and crowds flocked to the bull ring to gaze and applaud, as Mexico's fighting-bred bulls brought down this clumsy, slow-moving mountain of flesh.

Ned, the elephant, was of mammoth-size and he wore a pair of super-size tusks. As the leading attraction of the M. L. Clark wagon show, he plodded the dust and mud of the deep south in the early nineteen hundreds on travels which eventually took the circus to the Mexican border country and Ned to the center of a Mexican bull ring.

Though an elephant is a clumsy-looking animal he can actually use his feet nearly as handily as he can swing his trunk. A Spanish bull entered the arena, promptly charged Ned, and was kicked sprawling by the surprised elephant. This angered the Mexicans—they were not used to having their blue-blooded bulls treated in such an ignominious manner, so they released three bulls at the same time. One of these prodded Ned with its sharp horns. Then Ned went wild. He tossed bulls into the seats, and threw a matador or two and other bull ring personnel after them, just for good

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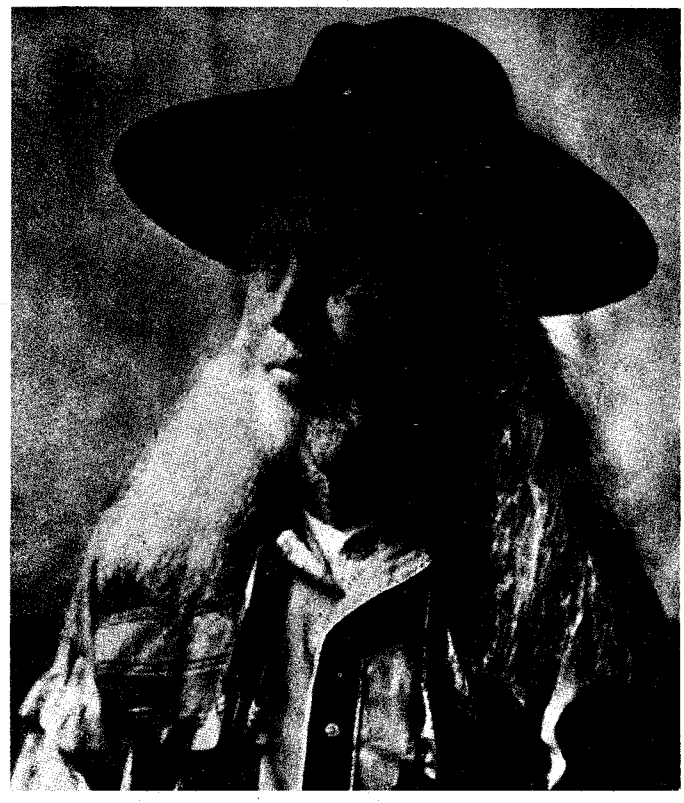
Texas Jack, last of the great Oklahoma bandits, tried to kill me that July day when

I LOOKED DEATH IN THE EYE!

BY HOMER CROY



Texas Jack, the man who almost pulled down on Croy.

If you've never had a real old-time Western outlaw threaten to kill you and back up his threat with a Colt .45, then you'll be interested in the following.

The ex-outlaw who threatened to finish me off was Texas Jack. The place was 17 South Boston Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma, and the time was July, 1948. Readers of TRUE WEST will, I hope, be pleased to know that he did not succeed.

The reason he wanted to do such a heinous deed was that I said he hadn't known Jesse James. That was all; just that. The crusty old coot had lectured before countless audiences telling them "Me and Jesse James was buddies"—then I came along and said that he didn't even know Jesse, let alone pal around with him. *I* made him real mad.

Texas Jack's real name was Nathaniel West, and he was born in Madison County, Arkansas, in 1862. Eventually he drifted from Arkansas and made Oklahoma his stamping ground. He was Oklahoma's last great train robber, and was in the business ten years before he got in the way of a bullet. But it didn't kill him.

When he was twenty-two years old, in 1884, he was working in the cotton fields of Arkansas at fifty cents a day. He didn't see any future in cotton, so he decided to have a go at train robbery—a brash thing for a lad of his age to try. That's what makes him remarkable. He went to Colorado and held up the crack Santa Fe Express and took in $6,480—no tax. Never again would he go back to a mule and a single shovel.

He kept on at it. When he ran out of money, he would hold up a train.

But the pitcher went to the well once too often.

The place was the Blackstone Switch, eight miles north of Muskogee, Oklahoma, on the north side of the Arkansas River and on the south side of the Verdigris River. The date was November 13, 1894. He had three helpers. They worked out their plans to perfection. When the matter was over they would mount their horses and ride away. It would be pie.

They stopped the engine and started to walk to the express car. One of Texas Jack's helpers was Tom Root, an Indian, who could gobble like a wild turkey. This was to be the signal for the men to enter the express car and do their stuff.

Tom Root gobbled.

Bud Ledbetter happened to be on that particular train. He was U. S. Deputy Marshal. When Ledbetter heard the gobble, he cocked his pistol. It was a bright moonlight night. Soon that moonlight was shining through Texas Jack. Bud had shot him through the middle.

Texas Jack, however, was a man of grit. Although badly wounded, he dragged himself to his horse. But he didn't do any fancy riding. It was all he could do to stay in the saddle.

The robbery was a sensation. Oklahoma turned out to hunt for Texas Jack. By this time, it was known who he was. A reward was on his head, dead or alive; shoot first, then ask.

The posse was pressing him close. One night in December, Texas Jack hid half-submerged in the Verdigris River behind a log. His teeth rattled like dice in a leather bottle. But the officers didn't find him.

Jack thought he was going to die and sent for his men, who came secretly. He told them how to divide the money and gave his saddle to his favorite helper. He shook hands with his men and told them good-bye. The men went away sadly. The next day they came back to bury him. There was Jack, still kicking.

"You're too early, boys," he said.

He hid out all winter with Oklahoma hunting high and low. In fact, he hid out four months and five days.

Then he wrote the Hanging Judge—Isaac C. Parker, in Fort Smith, Arkansas—and told him he would "come in." This Texas Jack did—on a home-made crutch. The deputy marshals who had been hunting him for four months shifted their tobacco quids to the other side of their mouths and looked sheepish.

Texas Jack was sentenced and finally, because of good conduct, was pardoned November 19, 1896. Then he began to lecture on Crime Does Not Pay—children half price.

Bud Ledbetter went to hear the lecture. After the lecture was over, the two got to comparing notes and found they were from the same county (Madison) in Arkansas. Bud said if he'd known that he wouldn't have shot him. It shows how Arkansas people stick together.

Jack's next step down was to become a writer. He wrote a book showing that Crime Does Not Pay. He had a covered wagon, slept in it at night, and then sold the book himself—an ideal way to make a living by writing. He completely eliminated the editor—a step up in the publishing business.

He joined a traveling carnival and lectured on his career as a train robber. In the lecture he told how he had known Jesse James. This was where I came in. I was looking up material to write a book on Jesse.

By this time I knew enough about Jesse so that I was certain that Texas Jack had never any more than seen the elusive Jesse. Yet, in his lecture, Texas Jack made it seem that he and Jesse were as necessary to each other as Siamese Twins.

There, in the room, was Texas Jack lying on top of a bed, with a pillow crumpled behind his back. Against one

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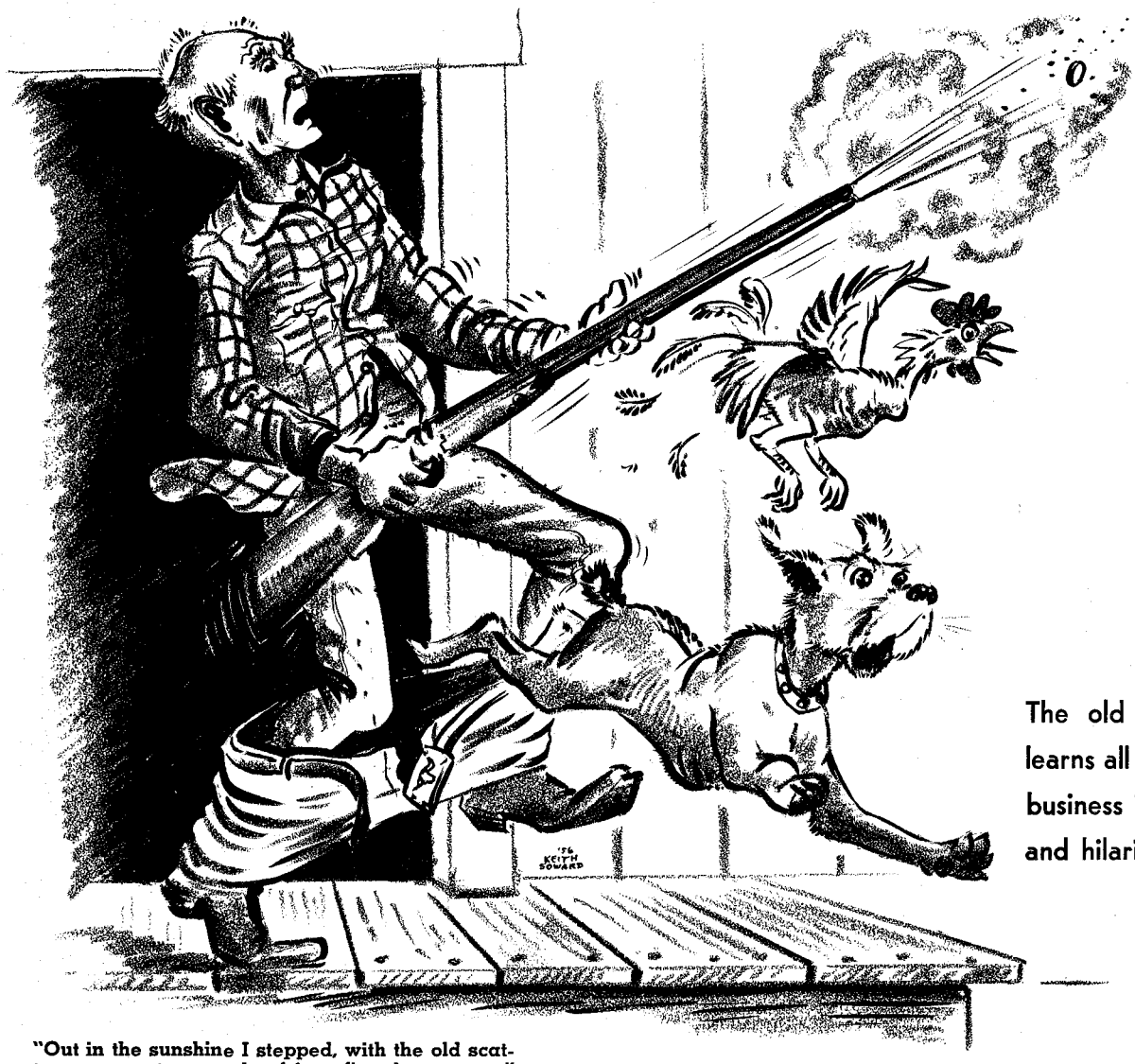

The old Foothill Filosofer learns all about the chicken business in six harrowing—and hilarious—months.

"Out in the sunshine I stepped, with the old scatter-gun up at an angle of forty-five degrees . . ."

Chicken At Midnight

BY GEORGE PHILLIPS

Illustrated by Keith Soward

IT seems as though every time I break away from the cow business I get in Dutch. I've only been in the business for seventy-eight years. I mean I've owned cattle that long, but have only been making a cow-hand for seventy-one years. Sure quite a change from them old rainbow-colored longhorns I herded as a boy to our present-day registered Herefords. Why, I can tell you . . . Hold up, boy! This yarn is about chickens, so let's pass up the cattle and tie into it.

A few years ago Ma made up my mind that our ranch in the mountains was too high for me; her too, of course. So we sold out and dropped down about three thousand feet lower onto the old Rio Gila in sunny Arizona. As I was sick, Ma suggested we go into the chicken business and mebbe get rich quick.

Well now, that listened pretty good to me. No heavy work, no being out in all kinds of weather, riding pitching ponies and standing night guard. Just gather up the eggs, count 'em and sell 'em. After studying the matter over, I was convinced there was no chance for failure. Matter of fact, I wondered how I'd missed catching onto this hen fruit deal before. But getting rich when you're past eighty is at least *some* better than never getting rich at all, so I was all for it.

Ma hops in and buys three hundred hens—and not a rooster in the dadgum lot! Mebbe I was only a dumb cow servant as Ma claimed, but I couldn't savvy *that* arrangement. When I was just a button, back home, my mother always had roosters with her flock. 'Twas agin nature not to have male birds with the females; that's for sartin. But Ma is Irish, and you can't argue with the Irish. (I know—I've tried it). So I says sort of sarcastic-like, "Hell, why not buy a *thousand* hens? It ain't much more trouble to gather up a thousand eggs a day than it is three hundred, and we'll get rich a dang sight quicker and take that long vacation we've been planning for fifty years."

At that, Ma bowed up like a tied bronc in a snow storm and 'lowed as how *she* was running this business without any back talk from *me*. She went on to say that I had been trying purt near all my life to make money in the cow business; that she had undergone many miserable years of hardship out in the hills and I had failed to even make her a decent living. So now, if I'd keep my lip buttoned up, we'd succeed—if *I* would just help a little. That suited me—except the helping part.

The first thing Ma ordered me to do was build chicken houses, runs, feed-hoppers and put up roosts. I opened my big mouth again at this point and said, "My mother raised chickens, and *they* roosted in the trees and rustled their own feed. We got a-plenty eggs too—sometimes."

BUT Ma wasn't listening to any more of my belly-aching, so I buckled down to work. Now, building chicken roosts and runs ain't no job for a sick man, 'specially if it's a hurry-up job like I had. I tried to slow down, but Ma wouldn't allow it. She was terribly enthused, and Irish-like, she wouldn't

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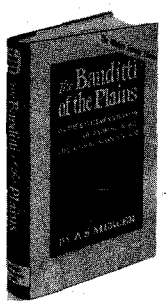

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stand for no back talk or lolly-gagging from me. Eventually I got everything fixed up jake, outside of a few mashed fingers on account of my inexperience in wielding a hammer. I also ran plumb dry of my extensive and profane vocabulary. At that, I was kinda proud of my work when the whole durn shebang was finished.

Now, I cal-lated, I'll just help out easy-like by counting the eggs and nailing up the crates and cranking up ole Liz and hauling 'em in to town to market. Mebbe I'd even get a few snorts of panther juice each trip, I figgered.

But even that small comfort was denied me. Ma says, "Sorry to spoil your fun, George, but these are different times from when you were a boy. The buyers will come out from time to time and pay for eggs right on the barrelhead. Also, as I am running this business, *I* will take care of the finances. All you need to do is just *work!*"

I soon found out that three hundred hens won't lay three hundred eggs a day. They'll all stand up to the hoppers and eat, but that don't spell anything. Some hens will lay and turn right around and eat the egg—and if that ain't ingratitude, I don't know what is!

To eliminate that foul habit—no pun intended—and to make my work as a hen nurse lighter, I placed a few crates in the coops at night located in strategic positions. Then when the hens went to work in the morning, everything would be ready and the eggs would drop right into the containers. All I'd have to do would be to replace the crates from time to time.

When Ma came back from the pens the next morning, I woke up with a bang. I knew from the way she was stepping that hell was a-gonna pop but I couldn't figger out just why. I soon found out when Ma got within yelling range. She made me foller her out to the coops, and gosh-dang if I ever saw such a messed-up bunch of eggs and egg crates in all my borned days!

My education in chicken raising continued. I learned that when the price of eggs go down—which it does quite often—the price of feed goes up, regardless of how much sawdust the mills mix with the laying mash. I learned also that chickens are susceptible to every ailment in the book: worms, round worms, tape worms, roup, diarrhea, diptheria, pip, range paralysis and coccidosis. And if that ain't enough, there's also hawks, owls, skunks, wildcats, coyotes, snakes and neighbors—and every damn one of 'em hungry for a chicken dinner!

Ma decided to increase our flock, so she ups and buys a thousand baby chicks. The County Agent came out and showed me how to make cheap brooders. Dig a hole six to eight inches deep. Put a lighted lamp or lantern in it, a piece of tin over all, and about one inch of sand on the tin and a box over it. As long as the little devils' feet are warm, they're okay. A feller has to lay down flat on his belly to fix the lamps. Cheap brooders—but more darn dirty work than I ever even dreamed of back in my bronc-riding days on the open range.

THINGS sorta simmered down after a spell and got to going real fine—until one night a storm came up. You know, Arizona's average rainfall is about twelve inches a year—and it all fell that night! We were sleeping on the porch, which is raised about six inches off the ground. All along about midnight I heard a roaring sound. I raised up and put my feet out on the floor in about eight inches of water. Now, I ain't afraid of water. I like a little for a chaser and to take a bath once or twice a year if I really think I need it. But here there was just too much water for any useful purpose.

I woke Ma up and told her she'd better roll out and go take care of her damn chickens. Nothing would do but I must help; she called it an "emergency." I wasn't hankering for a shower and a plunge all in one. The boxes were still dry, so I flattened out and dragged out the lamps and then handed out the little cusses into Ma's apron. Had 'em nearly all caught when along comes a two-foot wave of dirty, trashy cold water that covers me up entirely.

Well, I ups and quits and damns the boxes, the County Agent, and the entire chicken business from A to Izzard. I informed Ma in pure cowboy cuss words that she could wrangle the damn pesky things till daylight for all I cared. I waded back to the house and went to bed half-frozen.

At dawn, I woke with something cold and creepy crawling all over me. Damn if Ma hadn't put about five hundred of those pesky cold critters around me to thaw 'em out!

I don't reckon I was ever twice as mad in my whole life, except the time Ma undertook to incubate a passel of eggs in my bed when I was down with slow fever. I came out of there about the eighteenth day, and Ma lost the whole hatch. I didn't give a damn, nyther. Hell of a note when an old-time cowman winds up bein' used as a settin' hen while he's too weak to defend himself.

The hawks got awful bad that year. I made Ma a proposition; I'd shoot the hawks and she do the work, or she could do the work and I'd shoot the hawks. Take her choice; I wanted to be fair. Ma was afraid of the old shotgun on account of its kick, so I won that round handsdown. But even that caused me lots of grief. I'd no sooner get comfortably settled in my rocker, feet cocked on the table, interested in a book, till Ma would holler "Hawk! Hawk!" My, what a bother that got to be.

ONE day I had wrapped my carcass around a big bait of grub, and was rared back reading with my belly-band unbuckled, sorta snoozing a mite. I was so used to plowing out of there with that shotgun when Ma raised a rookus, I did it instinctively. This day all hell

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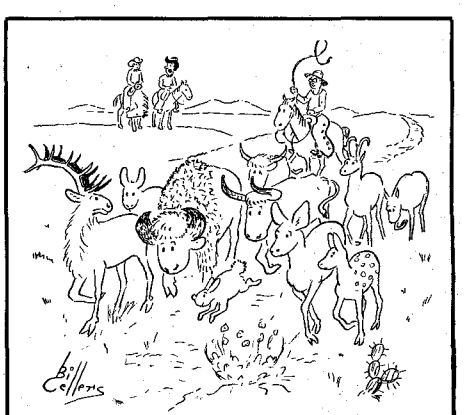

"Shade green, ain't he?"

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Truly Western

OLD-TIMER'S CORRAL

Dear Fred:

I first met Poker Alice during the mid-Twenties, soon after joining the Fourth Cavalry at Fort Meade, South Dakota. Entering the dental office waiting room at the Post Hospital, I discovered a conservatively dressed, rather elderly woman the only other occupant. We nodded and murmured greetings.

"You must be new here, Lieutenant," she said. "I don't recall seeing you before." She introduced herself as Mrs. Tubbs. (I never heard her mentioned as Mrs. Huckert until I read the article by Nino Lo Bello in the October issue.) We had a casual but pleasant conversation. She was mild-mannered, gracious and evidently well educated. In fact, I was quite impressed. Later, I asked the Dental Officer about her.

"Haven't you heard of Poker Alice?" he grinned. "Well, you'll learn!"

In the next three years I saw her many times and occasionally talked with her on the streets of Sturgis. Sometimes she was dressed as I had first seen her, and was quite sober. Sometimes she wore an army shirt and campaign hat, was completely equipped with belt, pistol and cigar, and was quite drunk but always able to navigate. She had a place near Bare Butte Creek between Fort Meade and Sturgis where she sold liquor (prohibition then) and conducted gambling. Our men gave her a great deal—perhaps most—of her patronage; and though she was said to have three notches on her gun, I recall no incident of disturbance at her place. In fact, she rather mothered some of the soldiers, especially recruits, limiting both their gambling losses and drinking. I've heard she would even loan them money in real emergencies, without interest.

Since our men seemed much safer at her place than at many others, the Post officers tacitly ignored its existence. Then a county attorney, elected on a reform ticket, had her arrested. But the Black Hills people took a sort of pride in Alice, and rose to her defense. She and Deadwood Dick, who later pre-deceased her, were the last two of the famous old-timers. So the case was quashed, and Poker Alice resumed business as usual—George J. Rawlins, Captain USA, Retired, Retired Officers' League, Box 14, Islamadora, Florida.

Editor, Old-timers' Corral:

Back around 1884, when I was twelve years old, I hired out to a cousin to drive a bunch of milk cows from Waelder, Gonzales County, Texas, to San Antonio at a dollar a day and furnish my own horse.

My cousin rode in the wagon, and slept most of the time. The distance was about 200 miles, a far piece to drive fifteen milk cows. If the grass was good, I hobbled my horse; if it was not good, I staked him and fed him corn. I was sure proud to be on a trail drive.

There were no fences, all wide-open range. There were also quite a few Indians and outlaw Mexicans lurking around the country, so we had to keep our eyes peeled for trouble. We made about ten miles a day, and got into San Antone after twenty days on the trail. I'd earned twenty dollars and felt mighty rich. I put my money in my boot and headed for home.

About twenty-five miles from San Antone, I ran into a band of bad Mexicans with a bunch of stolen cattle and horses. They promptly took charge of my little .38 pistol, and when night came on they had me drag up firewood to cook their meals. When I got through dragging wood and had a meal of beans and tortillas, they put me on guard over the cattle along with several other fellers.

Along about ten o'clock there came up a thunderstorm—a bad one. As the cattle, some 200 head, were all range stuff, they stampeded. We had our work cut out for us. I was trying to get in the lead of a bunch and I saw a feller moving up on the other side of them. Suddenly, his horse stumbled and fell. He lay still, but the horse got up and came over to me. I reached out and took hold of his bridle reins.

Hoss-lover Nancy Dorman.

The horse was about the same size as mine, and he ran along side of me as nice as you please. We left the cattle and hiked out together. Seguin was only about fifteen miles, and we made it in good time. I knocked on the livery stable door, and the night man let me in. He fed my horse, and I went to sleep on my slicker and saddle blankets.

I slept until daybreak, then went and got me a cup of coffee and some breakfast. Then I went back to the livery stable, paid the stable man, saddled up and hiked out toward the San Marcos River. When I got there, I found it was nearly bank-full and there were ten or twelve people waiting for it to run down fordable.

My horse was a good swimmer, so I busted into it and made it across fine. My sister's place was only ten miles farther on, and when I got there they were sure surprised to see me. My brother-in-law says, "That extra horse you got belongs to Billy Brown. The Mexicans stole him. Bill is offering twenty-five dollars reward for him, so you are ahead the reward money and that dandy Mexican saddle worth fifty dollars."

He also says, "George, I'll give you twenty-five dollars for the outfit—that's enough money for a kid." I accepted the offer, being only too glad to get rid of the outfit. Fifty dollars was a fortune to a young button like me.

Well, that was my first trail drive and the luckiest one—George Phillips, Route 2, Duncan, Arizona.

Who Said All TW Readers Are Old-timers?

Dear Joe Small:

Well, you asked for it; so here goes! Now—just why does a young girl like me like TRUE WEST? Well, I've always liked the West and have especially enjoyed true stories about it. There is nothing better than a story about a lost mine or an Indian fight. I love to prowl around in old ghost towns and listen to old Indian tales, so TRUE WEST really fills the bill for me. So what if it's history? It's true, and what could be more exciting?

I am enclosing a picture of me and my saddle horse, which I ride every day. I would rather ride than eat. My friends and I enjoy riding mountain trails, and I wouldn't trade those rides for anything else in the world. Last summer I attended the State Sheriff's Posse Ride at Mount Hood, then spent several days riding over in Eastern Oregon. My biggest thrill was when I rode in the midnight race between the Southern Pacific passenger train and the Pony Express. That was one ride I'll never forget!

I couldn't say a thing against TRUE WEST except that I sure wish it was a monthly magazine. I just can't seem to get enough of it—and two months is such a *long* time between issues. Keep up the good work—and how about some more stories of lost mines? Best of luck in '57—Nancy Dorman, Box 24, Oakland, Oregon.

Interesting Information on the San Saba Mine Map

Dear Editor:

John A. Masters' story of the Lost San Saba Mine was an interesting one, especially to me. I lived in Menard off and on for about ten years and had the opportunity to listen to numerous tales of the mine as recounted by some of the natives. I remember seeing a rough map, similar to the one in the October TRUE WEST, carved on a flat limestone rock. This was years ago, and I don't remember too many of the details but do know that it resembled the one shown in TW. The map was supposedly found somewhere around the old Mission. I also saw a triangular silver bar that was recovered from the San Saba River near the old Mission site. (At least, that was the story told by the man who found it.) The silver bar, and the old map carved on the rock caused quite a bit of excitement at the time. The map shown together with Masters' story mentions "Los Morris Creek" and "Salary Creek." For your information, they are Las Moras and Celery Creeks. Evidently the map is quite ancient, which accounts for the misspelling of these words.

Personally, I think the story of the

(Continued on page 46)

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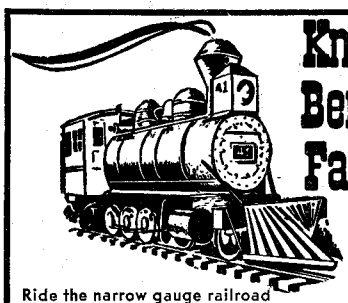

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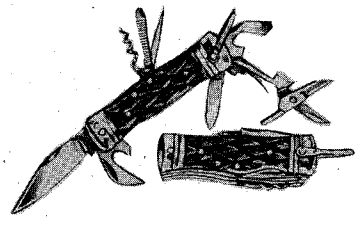

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Final resting place for Billy the Kid at Ft. Sumner, N. M.

Killer Kid!

(Continued from page 8)

The Kid sent back a message by his Mexican friend that he would come and follow the instructions to the letter.

Promptly on schedule the young outlaw showed up at Squire Wilson's house. Here, in an inner room, the Kid met the Governor and the old Justice of the Peace in earnest discussion. No record of the conversation has been preserved, but—judging from the Kid's subsequent actions—Governor Wallace must have promised Billy a pardon if he surrendered and was convicted in the courts. It is fairly certain that the three men worked up a deal that night at Squire Wilson's. The Kid took his own sweet time about allowing himself to be arrested, but finally came to it on March 21, 1879.

Somehow the wires of trust and confidence between outlaw and Governor got crossed up during Billy's weeks in jail. At the April term of court he pled not guilty to the murder of Sheriff Brady and Deputy Hindman during the war between the clans. The court was grimly amused by this, and slapped him back into jail to await trial. Billy waited a few days for Governor Wallace to show his hand; then—when no sign was forthcoming—broke jail. Later that same month, the Kid appeared at Fort Sumner to testify at the military court of inquiry investigating the actions of one Colonel Dudley during the burning of the McSween house. The doughty Colonel had sat on his rump watching the show instead of moving in with his militia to put an end to the burning and slaughter.

Colonel Dudley's defense was that he had "no authority to interfere in the battle because Sheriff Peppin was on the ground and in command of the situation." The court pondered this amazing statement, came to the conclusion that the Colonel's defense was technically sound if morally peculiar, and exonerated him from the grave charge of criminal negligence of duty brought against him by the heartbroken widow of Alex McSween.

Billy the Kid smiled cynically at the ruling, walked out of the courtroom and turned to open outlawry. Never again did he trust the law in any manner.

ADDING insolent emphasis to his decision to remain a desperado, the Kid and a small band of comrades embarked at once upon a series of new and daring crimes. Striking first at the Mescalero Apache reservation to obtain fresh horses, the outlaws ran off the best of the Indians' pony herd. Joe Bernstein, an Agency clerk, spotted the raiders in action and was instantly shot down for "not minding his own business," as Billy later explained. The Kid drew credit for Bernstein's murder; whether he actually pulled trigger is unimportant, since he was the leader of the raiders.

Well mounted now, the Kid and his wild crew turned to stealing cattle. Six men rode with Billy at first on these rustling expeditions; Charlie Bowdre, Tom O'Folliard, Doc Skurlock, Fred Wayte, Black Jack Middleton and Hank Brown. Professional cattle thieves Dave Rudabaugh, Tom Cooper, Billy Wilson, Tom Pickett and Tom Webb later joined up with Billy, making his outlaw band the deadliest then operating in the Southwest. Their depredations ranged over half New Mexico and beyond; from the Texas Panhandle to Las Vegas. The Kid quickly acquired a wide reputation as a cool, smart operator. As his reputation grew, it became necessary from time to time for him to defend it with bullets.

A Texas gunman, Joe Grant, was first to tangle with the boy outlaw king.

The Kid, accompanied by Barney Mason and Jim Chisum, walked into Hargrove's saloon in Fort Sumner to find Grant there, drunk and quarrelsome. Upon spotting Billy, Grant went behind the bar and began knocking glassware off the shelf with the barrel of his six-gun. The Kid figured that weird performance at once. Grant, not so drunk as he pretended, was working up his nerve to kill him. Grinning his disarming, bucktoothed grin, the Kid moved in on the gunman. "Nice lookin' pistol you got there, Joe. Mind if I look at it?"

Caught offguard, Grant stood stupefied as Billy took his fancy, ivory-handled Colt .45 from his hand and examined it. He came out of his trance when Billy handed it back. Snarling, he whipped up the gun and pulled the trigger. The hammer fell upon an empty chamber. The Kid in handling the Colt, had spotted the empty chamber and deftly revolved the cylinder to bring it under the hammer on the next pull of the trigger. Shocked cold sober by the sickening click of the firing pin on the empty shell, Joe stood transfixed with horror and took Billy's slug squarely between the eyes.

Coolly, the Kid holstered his gun and turned to the ashen-faced bartender. "Joe was plumb careless handlin' a six-gun," he grinned. "Set up the drinks!"

THE short reign of Billy the Kid as King of the Rustlers was doomed when the great cattle barons of New Mexico elected the grim ex-buffalo hunter, Pat Garrett, Sheriff of Lincoln County. The Kids former friend and associate in the the Lincoln County War, old John Chisum, was among the prominent cattlemen backing Garrett. Friendship meant nothing to Chisum when his precious Jingle-bob beef critters started disappearing.

Tall Pat Garrett was an ideal choice for the tricky and dangerous job of running down the Kid. Garrett, too, had been friendly with Billy and most of his outlaw band. He knew the desperadoes' favorite hangouts in the towns of Lincoln, Fort Sumner, Roswell, and White Oaks. He had ridden the lonely trails leading to their secret mountain hideouts. Pat was a crack shot with either rifle or

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pistol and was credited with plenty of guts and savvy.

The Kid himself understood at once that Garrett's election as Sheriff meant an end to his carefree days of easy plundering. He figured that eventually he would kill Garrett or that Garrett would kill him. Pat figured the same way. It was in the cards that one of them must die at the other's hand. Billy welcomed the showdown. He failed to realize the fact that the old lawless days were swiftly passing, and if it were not Garrett that ran him down it would inevitably be a successor.

Four days before Christmas of 1880, the little hamlet of Fort Sumner was electrified by the furtive message that Billy the Kid would attend the gala Christmas Ball to be held Christmas night at the military post. Barney Mason, turned informer on his old mates, rode ninety miles across country in freezing weather to carry the news to Sheriff Garrett at Roswell. Garrett moved fast and had all roads leading into Sumner covered by armed guards on Christmas Eve, when the Kid and his party were scheduled to arrive. A blizzard whipped in at dusk to complicate matters.

Near midnight the lookout on the Texas road reported to Pat and his waiting posse that Billy and four of his gang were approaching town. Garrett tossed away his poker hand, checked the action of his Winchester and said crisply: "Okay, boys. Let's go!"

Beyond the old military hospital at the edge of town, five riders jogging single-file loomed up suddenly out of the driving snowstorm.

Garrett covered the leader with his rifle and barked: "Halt! Hands up!"

The horseman cursed in surprise and reached for his six-gun. Garrett and Deputy Lon Chambers fired together. The outlaws whirled their horses and vanished ghost-like in the storm, with the bullets of the posse buzzing after them.

The wounded man rode a hundred yards or so, then stopped and slumped in his saddle. Suddenly, with a gasp of agony, he turned his horse and rode slowly back toward Garrett and his men.

"Tom O'Folliard!" swore Garrett in disgust as the outlaw approached. "Hell, I might have known the Kid wouldn't be ridin' in the lead!"

"Don't shoot," gasped O'Folliard. "I'm killed!"

"Throw up your hands!" snapped the Sheriff, suspecting a trick.

The outlaw clutched blindly at his saddle horn. "My God, Pat, I *can't!* Take me down and let me die!"

Garrett and Deputy Jim East lifted the groaning desperado from his horse and carried him into the hospital. They laid him gently on a cot and covered him with a blanket. Tom barely had time to mumble, "Write my folks in Texas," before he died.

RELENTLESS Pat Garrett caught up with Billy and his boys on the cold, wintry morning of December 27, 1880. Acting on a rancher's tip, Garrett discovered the reduced outlaw band holed up in an old abandoned house at Stinking Spring, twenty miles from Fort Sumner. Only four men remained with the hunted Kid: Dave Rudabaugh, Tom Pickett, Billy Wilson, and the Kid's best friend, Charlie Bowdre.

The Sheriff's Posse surrounded the house at dawn and waited patiently for the outlaws to appear. Garrett himself, with Jim East, Lee Hall and Tom Emory, crawled through the snow to an *arroyo* within point-blank rifle range of the shack door.

Sunrise reddened the eastern sky before the five desperadoes inside the crumbling stone house awoke. Charlie Bowdre was the first to step outside, carrying two canvas feed-bags half-filled with oats for the shivering horses tied to the *viga* poles projecting from the front of the flat roof.

From the arroyo thirty yards away, Sheriff Garrett called out sharply: "We've got you covered, Charlie! Put up your hands and walk this way."

Shouting a warning to the men inside the house, Bowdre dropped the feed-bags and snatched out his Colt. Garrett's finger squeezed the trigger of his rifle and sent a slug smashing into Bowdre's chest. Charlie lurched against the wall of the house, clawed blindly along it until he found the door and stumbled inside.

Within the shack, Billy the Kid caught Bowdre in his arms as Charlie was sinking to the floor. "Come on, Charlie—go out there and get some of them bastards before you cash your chips!" yelled the Kid, shoving his pal back out the door.

Almost strangling with blood from his mortal wound, his six-gun dangling harmlessly from the fist tight-clenched against his blood-streaming chest, Charlie reeled toward the edge of the *arroyo* where Garrett and his three Deputies crouched behind leveled Winchesters.

"Don't shoot, boys," ordered Pat. "The poor devil's done for."

Charlie lurched toward them; eyes closed, face contorted in agony. Frothy blood bubbled from his twisted mouth as he gasped, "I wish—I wish . . ." and pitched forward over the edge of the *arroyo* into Garrett's arms. Pat laid the dying outlaw on the frosty ground and watched in stony silence as he choked his life away.

After Bowdre's death, Garrett called upon the Kid to surrender—and received in reply a volley of curses and bullets. The sharpshooting Sheriff retaliated by shooting one of the gang's horses in the head, so that the body fell across the doorway, effectively blocking the entrance to any hurried exit. Pat then drew down on the tie-ropes securing the other two horses and cleanly severed them with bullets. The startled horses trotted away, humped against the bitter cold.

"Nice shootin', Pat!" yelled the Kid from within the house. "But we got two more horses in here. You can't shoot *them* loose!"

"You can't ride 'em, either, Billy!" retorted Garrett with grim humor.

The siege continued all day with no further casualties on either side. Near sunset, a wagon came up from the nearby Wilcox ranch with food for the posse. Lee Hall and Tom Emory built a cook-fire, at the bottom of the *arroyo,* while Garrett and Jim East watched the house.

Soon the tantalizing odors of frying bacon and boiling coffee drifted to the trapped outlaws. "Hey, Pat!" shouted the Kid. "Don't be a hog—send us over some coffee. We're freezin' in this damn shack!"

"Come and get it, Billy," cordially invited the Sheriff. "But come real slow—with your hands *up!*"

Presently the Kid stepped over the carcass of the dead horse blocking the door-way, waving a white handerchief in token of surrender. "You win, Pat," grinned the bucktoothed killer. "That coffee smells awful good—and there ain't

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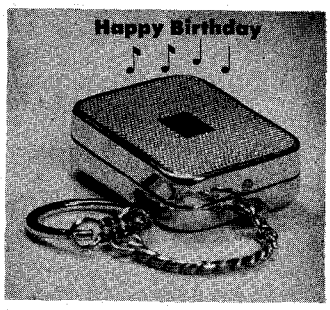

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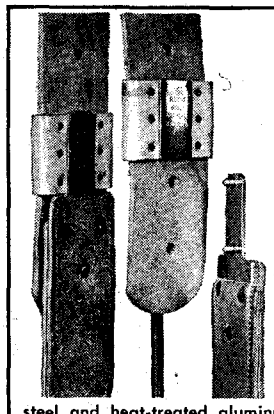

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no sense gettin' my guts blowed out like Charlie got *his!*"

Covered by his Deputies, Garrett warily approached the Kid. "Right, Billy," agreed the Sheriff coldly, taking the outlaw's gun. "No sense at all!"

EARLY IN APRIL, 1881, the Kid was tried at Mesilla, New Mexico, for the ambush murder of Lincoln County Sheriff Brady in Lincoln three years before. Billy didn't stand a Chinaman's chance of acquittal. Defense lawyers Ball and Fountain stressed the factor of "reasonable doubt" in the case, emphasizing the fact that six men in all took part in the shooting of Sheriff Brady. The Kid listened intently and with seeming amusement to the verbal broadsides fired by his attorneys. He didn't appear surprised when the jury brought in a verdict of "Guilty of murder in the first degree." Billy was sentenced to be returned to Lincoln and placed in the jail there, to await execution by hanging.

Civil authorities and cattlemen all over the Southwest heaved a collective sigh of relief at the news of Billy's sentence. Jubilantly, they congratulated Sheriff Garrett. Pat curtly reminded them that only the hangman's noose or a bullet could put a final period to the outlaw career of Billy the Kid. "Save your congratulations until Bill Bonney is planted six feet deep!" growled the tall Sheriff. Garrett knew the caliber of his prisoner better than anyone else.

On April 21, Garrett escorted the Kid back to Lincoln. The execution had been set by the court to take place on May 13, "between the hours of nine a.m. and three p.m." "Don't make it early enough to spoil my sleep!" cracked Billy to the grim, unresponsive Sheriff.

Pat confined the Kid on the second floor of the courthouse. This two-story building, formerly the Murphy & Dolan store, was the most solidly constructed edifice in town. Garrett kept Billy manacled hand and foot, under the constant surveillance of Deputies Bob Ollinger and Jim Bell. The selection of Ollinger as guard was a shrewd move of Garrett's, since Bob hated the Kid with an almost insane hatred. Ollinger had been a *compadre* of Bob Beckwith, who had murdered Alex McSween. Seconds later, Billy the Kid had gunned down Beckwith—and Ollinger had sworn to kill him for it.

Ollinger, who wore his hair long *a la* Wild Bill Hickok, drew crude pictures of Billy strangling at the end of a rope, and showed his art work to the prisoner with mocking laughter. He tried constantly to taunt the Kid into making a break for freedom, so he could shoot him down. Billy said little in response to the tormenting, but his weirdly brown-flecked gray eyes smoldered. Finally he said softly: "You yellow son-of-a-bitch, I'll live to spit on your bloody carcass!" Bob got the shakes at that, and quit bothering the prisoner except when Bell was present to bolster his nerve.

THE slow days dragged by. Bell, disgusted with Ollinger for his sadistic cruelty, made friends with the condemned youth. Right there, Jim assured his own death.

What followed then surpasses in sheer implausibility the wildest Western movie of today. Nobody knows for certain just how Billy accomplished his incredible exploit; yet the amazing facts are these:

On the evening of April 28, the Kid escaped from the courthouse, killing both Bell and Ollinger and riding through Lincoln in triumph on his way to the mountains and freedom.

Half a dozen fascinating versions of his fantastic exploit are still on tap in the "Billy the Kid country" around Lincoln. There, where the Kid seems still to be a living legend, most old-timers agree that Deputy Bell was bringing Billy back to the second floor of the courthouse after allowing him a few minutes' exercise in the yard. The Kid, whose leg-chains were long enough to permit him to walk briskly, got ahead of Bell and hustled up the stairs to the armory room. The door was locked, but Billy lunged at it and burst it open. He grabbed up a loaded six-gun and whirled to face Bell.

Anxiously, the tricked Deputy rounded the first landing of the stairs and looked up into the muzzle of Billy's Colt. Normally a good shot, the Kid fired two wild slugs that struck the wall at Bell's side; one ricocheted freakishly and pierced his breast. Jim plunged back down the stairs, tried vainly to call for help, collapsed and died. The Kid ducked back into his former prison room to seize Ollinger's loaded shotgun, left with Bell while Bob went out to eat supper.

Across the street in the restaurant, Ollinger heard the muffled boom of the shots in the courthouse. He pulled his Colt and came racing.

The courthouse seemed to drowse peacefully in the early spring twilight as Bob approached it. Nothing seemed amiss—maybe the shots hadn't been fired in the building after all . . . Ollinger headed around the courthouse, toward the stairway that led to the backyard.

"Hello, Bob!"

The Deputy stopped short, an icy fear jolting his heart. That was the Kid's voice, coming from above him—from a side window on the second floor of the courthouse. . . .

Slowly, fearfully, Ollinger looked up into the mocking gray eyes and white, smiling face of Billy the Kid—framed behind the deadly twin muzzles of Bob's own shotgun. Flame spurted from one of those gaping muzzles even as the doomed Deputy stared up at it in paralyzed horror. The heavy load of buckshot struck Ollinger full in the chest, killing him instantly. Deliberately, the Kid fired his second barrel into the crumpled corpse. He dropped the empty shotgun on the body, spat down upon it, and grinned: "There you are, Bob—paid in full!"

After settling his score with Ollinger, Billy walked boldly out on the gallery overlooking the street. From this vantage point he yelled to old man Geiss, the jail janitor, to fetch a file. Tremblingly, the old man brought the file. The Kid then ordered him to go down into the neighboring pasture lot, and catch and saddle the horse that grazed there. Geiss trotted off obediently.

Billy rolled himself a cigarette and took a deep drag; then set about filing through the catch of his leg-irons. He had slipped his handcuffs to grab the gun from the armory. Early in his confinement, the Kid had discovered that his small hands and slender wrists could shed the over-sized cuffs at any time he wished. Patiently he had waited for the exact moment to make his break.

The last that Lincoln ever saw of Billy the Kid was a sight that none of his audience ever forgot. Boldly, a broad grin on his jail-white face, the young outlaw jogged his commandeered pony down the middle of the single street

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heading for the mountains. Twin Colts swung at his slim hips; he balanced a cocked Winchester across his saddle horn. Not a man among the fear-palsied spectators lifted a weapon in an effort to prevent his escape. Fortunately for the Kid—or *vice versa,* according to varying viewpoints—Sheriff Garrett was out of town that day, ordering the gallows for Billy's execution from a carpenter in White Oaks.

Always for dashing *caballero,* the Kid rode not for the border and probable safety, but for Fort Sumner where lived his current Mexican sweetheart. Billy lingered in Fort Sumner week after week, giving dogged Pat Garrett time to close in for the showdown each had sensed was inevitable.

A huge, full, July moon silvered the cottonwood-lined avenue as Sheriff Garrett, cattle detective Jack Poe, and Deputy Tip McKinney rode into Fort Sumner from the Mexican village of Punta de la Glorietta to the northward. Acting on a hot tip received in White Oaks that the Kid had holed up with friends in Fort Sumner to be near his girl-friend, Garrett was on his way to check out all leads and prospects.

On the outskirts of town, the three officers tied their horses in a grove of trees and walked a quarter of a mile until they came to a peach orchard. Just across the road stood the home of Manuela Bowdre, young and pretty Mexican widow of Charlie Bowdre.

For two hours Garrett, Poe and McKinney watched the darkened house across the road from their place of concealment in the orchard. It was nearing midnight on that 13th of July, 1881, when the Sheriff called off the fruitless vigil.

"Lead Number One shot to hell!" groused Pat. "Maybe Billy is hanging out here with the widow of his old *compadre,* maybe not. Anyhow, we can't wait any longer for him to show—and we can't search the house without a warrant."

"Let's go find Billy's pal, Pete Maxwell," suggested McKinney. "Could be the Kid's staying with Pete."

Garrett grunted skeptically. "Pete won't talk. He's half Mexican—and all Mexicans love the Kid. Call him *El Chivato,* and think he's sort of a frontier Robin Hood . . . Oh well, let's go find Pete anyhow. Best to check everything out, I suppose."

Silently, the three officers moved down the road into the sleeping village. Garrett led the way to the former commissioned officers' quarters at the old Army post. The large adobe-and-frame building was now the home of Billy the Kid's friend, Pete Maxwell.

The house loomed dark and silent in the flood of moonlight. At the porch, Garrett whispered: "Pete's bedroom is right there in that corner. You fellows stay here. I'll go in and wake Pete."

Pat darted across the verandah and entered the open door of Maxwell's bedroom. Poe and McKinney sat down on the edge of the porch and rolled cigarettes.

Inside the dark bedroom, Garrett touched the sleeping Maxwell's shoulder and softly called his name. "Pete—Pete, wake up! It's Pat Garrett."

Maxwell, startled, leaped half out of bed. *"Madre de Dios,* what it it?" he cried. Then, recognizing his midnight visitor, he exclaimed: "For God's *sake,* Pat! What are you doing here in the middle of the night?"

"Shh—take it easy, Pete. I'm here looking for the Kid. I've been informed . . ."

Outside, in the bright moonlight beyond the shadowed porch, a voice snapped out a question in Spanish—a voice that Garrett instantly recognized. The Sheriff's left hand shut down hard on Maxwell's shoulder, sternly demanding silence.

The voice outside repeated sharply, *"Quien es?*—and Jack Poe replied: "Put down that gun, you locoed *peon!* What the hell's the matter with you?"

The floorboards of the old porch creaked suddenly under light, quick footsteps. A boyish figure, holding a six-gun in one hand and a knife in the other, appeared in the doorway—and halted there, momentarily blinded by the abrupt transition from moonlight to darkness.

"Pete"—came the vibrant, high-pitched voice that Garrett knew so well—"Pete, who are those fellows outside?"

Maxwell trembled under the Sheriff's restraining hand, but he did not answer. Garrett's right hand dropped to his Colt, drew it swiftly from its holster.

The intruder—hearing the slight scraping sound of metal against leather—crouched low in the door-way, mercilessly silhouetted against a shimmering backdrop of moonlight.

"Pete!" he cried again, half-lifting his six-gun in an agony of indecision. *"Compadre, quien es?* Who's that with you, there in the dark by the bed?"

The thunderous crash of Garrett's .45 answered him. The slim figure in the doorway jerked grotesquely at the shattering impact of the heavy slug and crumpled to the floor. A single, shuddering sigh gurgled into silence.

The long man-hunt was over. Billy the Kid was dead.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

At first, in TRUE WEST, we decided against running oft-told yarns on the famous characters of the Old West UNLESS we could come up with a new angle; hither-to undisclosed information. Yet we continually receive mail urgently requesting articles on the well-known names, and Billy the Kid leads the list in number of requests. So, dadgum it, here is a story by TRUE WEST'S Research Editor which, while it may uncover no startling new dope on the Kid, is still the most compact and well-written account of Billy and his adventures we've yet seen.

Perhaps stories such as this one may prove the solution to our puzzling problem. WE WANT YOUR VOTE! So long as articles on the old characters are

"OK, OK—So it is yore hoss!"

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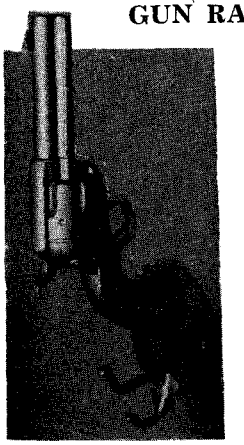

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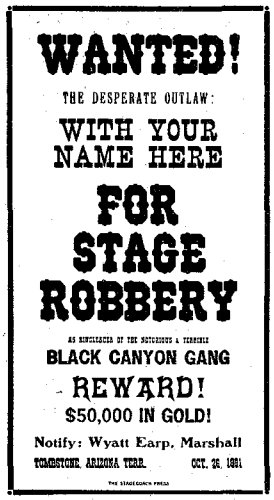

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well and interestingly written, REGARDLESS of whether they uncover any notable new dope, shall we print them? Or shall we skip them until we do uncover new information, if it is at all possible to do so? Now vote, you rascals, vote! This is YOUR magazine and we'll abide by your majority decision and clear up this difficult situation once and for always. As of right now, we're getting a mite het up by getting bawled out from one side of the fence FOR printing a few stories on the well-known characters of the Old West, and also getting our hides blistered from the other side for NOT printing enough of 'em. That sort of thing gets mighty irritating after a spell. Just WHAT do you want us to do? Stand up like men and TELL us before we go plumb loco trying to figure you out!

Sourdough Fixin's

(Continued from page 19)

although a clean cloth cover will suffice if no lid is available. The cover is very important because fermentation attracts flies and insects, and also because sourdough in an uncovered receptacle will form a hard crust over the top and around the sides. If sourdough is kept covered, it will remain soft, moist and uniform throughout.

At last we are ready to test our ingenuity as a chemist, domestic scientist and caterer to the envious appetites of favorite friends or guests, and to earn the coveted title of "sourdough sage" among cake eaters and cookie dunkers. All set? Okay, then, let's go!

The next time you boil *peeled* potatoes, save the water and any potato sediment that remains in the water. The sediment will help to start off with a rich body which enhances the flavor. Allow the water to cool to a temperature just slightly more than tepid. Extremely hot water will kill your yeast, which we are just about to add.

While the water is cooling, dissolve a cake of fresh yeast—dry yeast may be used but will not act as quick or effectively—in a separate container, and when the water has cooled sufficiently, add the dissolved yeast solution and a bit of sugar and salt, stirring them well together in the jar.

At this point we must agree upon a fixed amount of the whole mixture in order to prescribe our ingredients accordingly. Using the one gallon jar for six people as a standard, the liquid in the jar—including the potato, water and yeast solution—should occupy approximately one-fourth of the space in the jar, or about one quart. This will allow for the addition of necessary flour and leave plenty of surplus space for expansion.

To the quart of liquid in the jar, add an average teaspoonful of salt and a heaping tablespoonful of sugar. When these are well stirred together and evenly distributed, add enough sifted flour to make a dough that will just barely drip from the mixing spoon. Stir the whole mixture until all the lumps of flour are dissolved and the batter is perfectly smooth and uniform. Then place the covered jar in a sheltered spot of moderate temperature, neither hot nor cold, but as near consistently uniform as possible.

IF it becomes necessary to maintain warmth during cold nights, wrap the jar in heavy cloth or enclose it within some other insulator during the cold period and remove it at other times. If the temperature around the jar becomes too cold, the sourdough will become soggy, sluggish and dormant. To revive it, add more yeast if available, but if not, remix the batter with warm potato water and adjust the proper consistency with a little dash of flour.

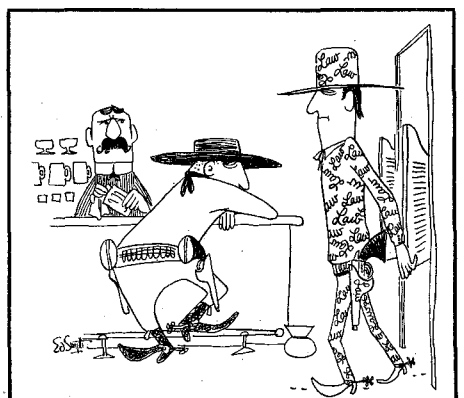
If the temperature around the jar becomes too hot, the sourdough will overwork, become too sour, and the solids will all settle to the bottom with the moisture on top. To revive it in this case, discard a portion of the dough entirely and remix the remainder with warm water in which a bit of baking soda and sugar have been previously dissolved.

When replenishing the batter each time after using the jar for baking, sweet milk is good as a liquid and sour milk may be used, providing it is not used too often in a short period, or when the dough is already too sour. Potato water is always best under all conditions, and plain water (lukewarm) may be used when the batter is at its maximum of efficiency.

When the original "starter" is first mixed in the jar, it should be allowed to work at least eight hours (longer is better) before it is used for baking. Also it is important to remember that the first batch or two of bread or biscuits will be in effect practically the same as yeast bread, and therefore will require very little baking soda. Only after the process of fermentation has been under way for some time will it really become "sourdough" and require the counteraction of soda.

All the foregoing details may appear by this time to be too much fuss and bother. But it must be borne in mind that we are starting from scratch; that many of these details will no longer apply or require consideration after the start is once made.

The amateur "sourdough artist" will soon learn a great deal from his own experience and practice. We are now merely trying to give him a good boost with all the fundamentals in advance. A recipe for the actual mixing and baking of a batch of biscuits would require only a few words, and the process itself requires only a few minutes. Also remember that it was not too much fuss and bother for cowpunchers, sheepherders, lumberjacks, forest rangers, freighters and prospectors, miles from civilization where they lacked convenient access to handy facilities and sources of supply.



"Watch it . . . This hombre's got 'law' written all over 'im!"

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And so, to follow through on our original plan of explaining every step in detail and in proper sequence, we come to the final process of actually preparing the sourdough for the finished product.

Assuming still that we are baking a batch of biscuits for six people, or its equivalent in bread, which would be approximately two loaves, we shall proceed accordingly. The process for baking a batch of biscuits or loaf bread is practically the same, except that the biscuit dough is not kneaded, and the loaves require slower baking over a longer period of time in order to bake clear through. As for flapjacks, the batter from the jar is merely mixed to a thinner consistency, with the same ingredients added, and beaten thoroughly with a spoon in a mixing bowl.

The "starter" which is left in the jar each time will vary, of course, with future plans. For example, if a large party is planned for the afternoon or evening meal, the sourdough should be tranferred the night before to a larger jar when it is last replenished, and none should be used on the morning of the party. So long as the sourdough is in good working condition and the demands made upon it are uniform and consistent, it will provide biscuits or flapjacks for the morning meal and again for late supper the same day.

Do not regard the container as a magic "Aladdin's Jar" which will produce miraculous results on the spur of the moment at any time by merely quoting the proper ritual. In order to get something out of it, you must put something into it, and allow plenty of time for it to work between extractions.

NOW we enter the final phase of our adventure, at the end of which lies a reward well worth the efforts any day.

Into a pan of hollowed out flour, pour a good half-gallon of sourdough from the jar, leaving approximately a quart for a starter. Upon the surface of the sourdough in the pan, sprinkle through the flour sifter (for even distribution) a level teaspoonful of baking soda—assuming that the dough is well aged—and the same amount of sugar and salt. The amount of sugar and salt is largely a matter of individual taste rather than function, although the sugar helps to brown the bread. The amount of soda, on the other hand, is very important and should be gauged according to the condition of the sourdough. Lively sourdough in good working condition will not require as much soda as that which is abnormally sour. One can usually tell by smelling the dough in the jar approximately how much soda to use, and practice will perfect one's skill in time. Too much soda will turn the bread a yellowish-green color, while the right amount will leave it white, porous and fluffy.

Having distributed the soda, sugar and salt evenly upon the surface of the fresh sourdough in the pan, stir them well into the dough before it becomes too thick. The half-gallon of sourdough will absorb considerable flour in the process and increase a great deal in volume.

When the dough is no longer sticky and can be handled with the bare hands, form it into loaves or biscuits as the case may be. Loaves may be kneaded slightly to shape them firmly, but do not knead the biscuit dough. Also in the latter case do not use a cutter, but pinch them off and shape them gently in the hands, as a cutter will seal the pores around the edges and retard their rising.

Dip both sides of the biscuits in a baking pan containing a generous amount of previously melted fat, and place them lightly together without too much crowding. Then cover the pan with a clean cloth and place it in a warm spot for about twenty minutes to allow them to rise as much as possible. If the biscuits are to be baked in a stove oven, it should not be excessively hot at the start, but rather a moderate temperature on the increase when the pan is placed within. This will allow them to finish rising to a maximum before baking, and this also applies to loaf bread.

In case a Dutch oven is to be used out-of-doors, the following process will be found very practical and successful, whether performed in your own back yard or out in the wilderness.

The first and most important requirement is a good supply of red-hot coals, and in order to have them ready when needed, the fire should be built and heavily fueled well in advance. Half burned embers or particles of charred wood are not suitable for baking and will only result in failure and disappointment. Hardwood coals are best, but they are not imperative so long as the best advantage of softwood coals is taken. By advantage we mean they should be red-hot and ready when needed and should be transferred from the original fire-bed to the oven pit in the shortest time possible without fumble or delay.

For the Dutch oven pit, dig a small round hole in the ground with straight perpendicular sides and as uniform as possible. The pit should be only of sufficient capacity to receive the Dutch oven with surplus space of about three inches underneath, around the edges and over the top. Do not be generous with this surplus space or your biscuits will burn outside before they bake clear through.

Do not attempt to bake biscuits in this fashion with a Dutch oven made of light-weight material. Many polished metal and light metal Dutch ovens are on the market which are pretty to look at and are popular in modern kitchens, but they are positively not suitable for baking biscuits in a pit of live coals. We are striving throughout this discourse to eliminate every hazard and danger of disappointment.

OUR prescription insists upon a heavy *cast iron* Dutch oven with a standard type lid or cover which seats itself over the rim of the oven with a flange or lip, and which has a rigid ring on top that one can locate among the live coals. The bottom section must also have a bail. If the original bail has been lost or broken, make one out of heavy wire and replace it while the oven is cold.

These heavy cast iron Dutch ovens may be purchased at any well-stocked hardware store at a reasonable price, and they are very useful in camp for many other purposes besides baking—as a hot water reservoir and for frying, boiling, basting, broiling, stewing and roasting, to name only a few.

But right now we are going to use it to bake that batch of biscuits. First we pre-heat the whole Dutch oven, including the lid or cover by hanging it over the edge of the fire on a hook or setting it on the back of the grate with a liberal amount of lard, tallow or vegetable fat in it.

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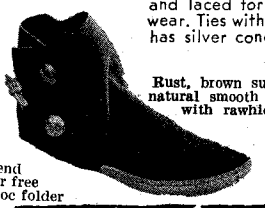

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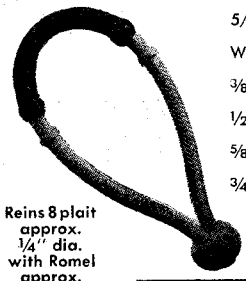

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By the time you have mixed and formed your biscuits, the oven will be hot enough to make them rise. Dip both sides of the biscuits in the melted fat as in the case of the baking pan, and place them lightly together, just tight enough to brace each other as they rise. Put on the cover of the oven and forget them for a few minutes while you attend to other chores.

Take a peek under the lid after a while—about fifteen minutes—and if the biscuits say "Howdy Do!" grab your shovel and scoot a good three inch layer of red hot coals into the bottom of the pit. Then lower the oven upon them dead center in the pit, fill in with more coals around the sides and over the top, leaving the ring of the lid protruding in plain sight so you won't have to go prospecting to locate it.

It is not necessary to seal the cover with dirt when baking. That's for long processes of cooking meats or other heavy foods which would allow the top coals to die before the contents are done. A three-inch layer of coals over the top will survive the baking process.

When the time is up, be sure to remove the live coals from the lid and around the rim before lifting it off for examination, or they will fall into the bread. Also do not disturb the bottom section of the oven until you are sure the biscuits are completely done. If they are not quite done, simply replace the bare lid for a few more minutes and the remaining coals underneath and around the sides will finish the job.

WHILE the biscuits are baking, let us digress for a moment to assure you that whatever may be your equipment, your location, your storage facilities, or your mode of transportation, sourdough will be no burden once you have thoroughly mastered the art as did the outdoor men of the Old West.

Also, whatever may be your appetite for baked goods at present, you have a rare treat in store for you. Sourdough products are not only more healthful than those produced by baking powder or other synthetic chemical processes, but they are genuinely nourishing and satisfying, and they have a distinctive flavor that lingers and delights the palate long after the meal is over.

So gather 'round here now, you cake-eaters, cookie-dunkers and cream-puff-munchers; we are about to teach you-all a new trick. It is typically an old American custom which originated in the Far West, but which, like many American customs and characters, has a tendency to migrate, gravitate, penetrate and disseminate throughout the nation as a whole. It comes to y'all today from the Deep South, traditional land of gracious living, where it has simply and unobtrusively retired among the shortenin' bread, corn pone and hush puppies.

Suppose y'all just imagine that you are attending a huge convention in the Magic Convention City of Miami, and have already been entertained at huge outdoor barbecue parties which served bakery buns or at a great fish fry which served hush puppies. You may even have enjoyed the culinary delight of Southern fried chicken with buttermilk biscuits in a private home where the tradition of Southern hospitality is really taken seriously. You may have found satisfaction in any one of the many famous public eating places in the Greater Miami area—"Seven Seas," "Pickin' Chicken," "Hoffbrau Haus," "Old Scandia," "The (Vienna) Garden,"—but you ain't seen *nothin'* yet!

Our sourdough biscuits are now ready, and when we pull those overgrown nuggets out of the Dutch oven, the aroma itself will make you drool—and when you get your feet under the table and sink your teeth into one of these buttered beauties, you will soon know how come sourdough to be formerly associated with:

GOLD MINES, GOLD MINERS AND GOLD RUSHES.

Witches' Brew

(Continued from page 17)

that he acquire some personal object which had belonged to his deceased grandfather and keep it near his bed. He duly arranged to get a neck scarf that his grandfather had worn often before his death.

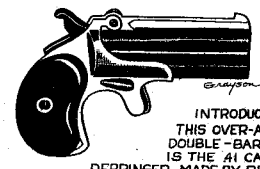
In the meantime, he told me that once when he had been working away from home, an aunt had called to tell that his mother was dying because his grandmother had already carried flowers to the church.

He rushed to the stricken woman's bedside and found that she was unable to move or speak. His aunt said that he must go curse his grandmother. That would, of course, be an unpleasant chore for anyone, grandmothers receiving the widespread respect that they do. But Jack was fearful of his mother's life. He said, "The names I called her cannot be printed; in fact, I hate to say them at all."

In two hours his mother was up and around. She prepared a nice supper of roast beef, chile beans and corn bread, for her son that night. Several people recently substantiated this story when I questioned them.

Oddly enough, two weeks after he placed the scarf by his bed, his grandmother passed away. Sewn in the lining of her coat was a small tobacco sack with an assortment of grass, weed and other plant seeds. Inside that was a ring that had belonged to Jack's sister when she was a small girl. It was cut in half and tied together with a string. The little sack was for all the world like a small stomach. The girl had suffered for years from pains in her stomach and doctors had been unable to help her. Immediately after the grandmother's death, the pains ceased for both Jack and her.

If by chance all of this has worried you about witchcraft, use some of the practicioner's own medicine. Just hang a pair of open scissors over a window. This is supposed to cut the tail off any evil spirit trying to enter. Scissors are useful to cut paper, cloth or witch doctors' advertisements out of newspapers except, like their contemporary M.D.s, witch doctors don't have to advertise—they have plenty of customers anyway.



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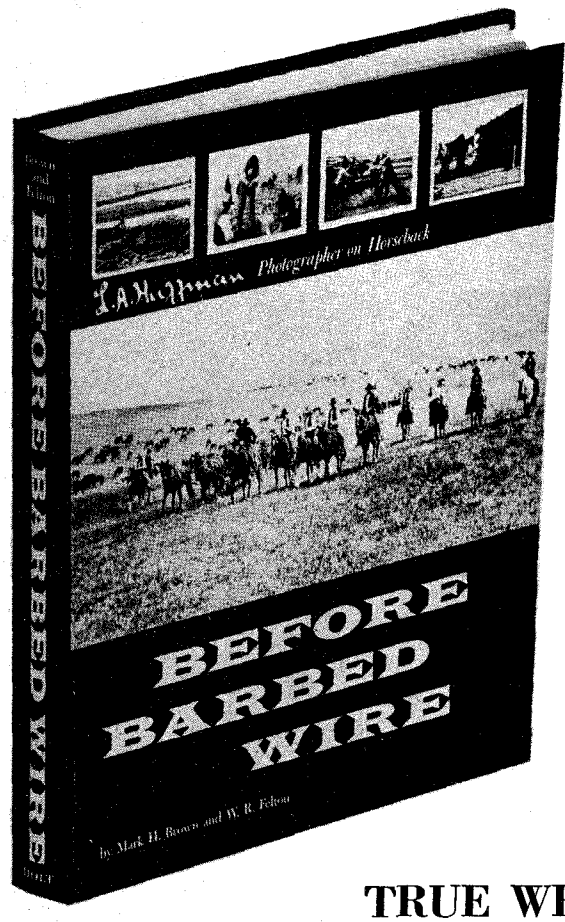

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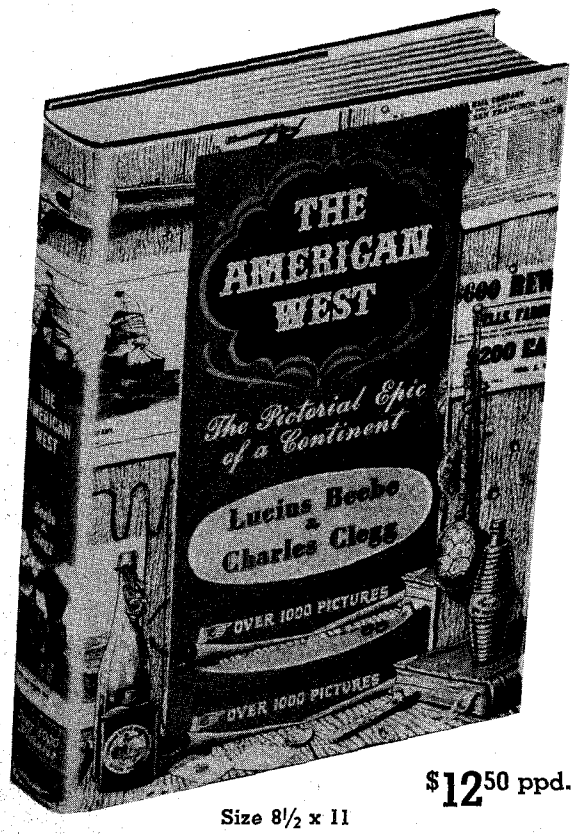

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"That Omaha fellow who blinked the antelope and got Mormons."

Mi Ashe Ton Gaxas

(Continued from page 13)

sign." The marauding red man painted this sign on windows, over stable doors, and sometimes upon the very horses picked for heisting. This was done to torment the owner and warn him. It was a bad luck sign, and worried him greatly.

The hoofprint sign was adopted by the whites. Horsemen of today nail horseshoes over their stable doors with the open ends upward, so that sickness will be driven away from their stables and their mares will foal beautiful and healthy colts. But the inverted horseshoe remains a symbol of very bad luck.

THROUGH his powerful glass, a cavalry officer once sighted what he believed to be two horses heisted from his command. Upon arrival at the distant hilltop where he had spotted the "horses," the angry officer found two crude dummies resembling horses bearing squeaky military saddles which Grandpa did not like. Moccasin tracks disclosed that Grandpa and another *gaxa* had spent hours patiently constructing the dummies especially to fool the gullible cavalry. It was a jest he played on them several times.

Humiliating a cavalry officer in the presence of his command was more fun than killing him, according to the *Mi Ashe Ton* doctrine. The methods used in such humiliation were often fiendishly ingenious. In one such incident, some cavalry mounts of inferior quality were heisted. Three days later, their saddles painted with "pokie," an invisible sap of the poison oak variety that causes an agonizing itch for about nineteen days, the horses were quietly returned at night. Thus, a cavalry unit was reduced to foot soldiering for a period of three weeks.

The finest cavalry horses were ridden by the higher officers, who took great pride in their horsemanship. Since riding a horse lame reflected upon its rider, enlisted men were gazing askance at a certain high-ranking officer who had lamed five horses in five days. The five splendid mounts were put to pasture to recuperate.

Soon, white people of peculiar character were rounded up and questioned about the disappearance of the five high-spirited but slightly lame mounts. But they were not recovered. It was known that the Indians regarded an ailing horse as bad medicine. Being possessed with evil spirits, they would not ride, eat or come near it. The convalescing horse at pasture was much safer than those behind rock walls, iron gates and padlocked log chains.

A few months later this happened again. The same officer (whom Grandpa, White Horn and Otopasco did not like) had lamed five more beautiful mounts. Again enlisted men looked upon him with lifted eyebrows, and the injured horses were put to pasture. Again, white men of peculiar character were rounded up and questioned about the disappearance of the slightly lame horses.

This hurt Grandpa's feeling very much because retrograde whites were stealing his thunder, getting credit for his work and taking the sting out of his bite. But the *Mi Ashe Ton* technique eventually leaked through the White Curtain. With red faces, the officers learned that their prize mounts had been "stippled" by the *gaxas* in the dark of the moon, and were put to pasture for lame.

A small needle threaded with horse hair was run through the leg slightly above the hock. It was scarcely felt by the horse. Protruding ends of the hair were cropped at the surface of the skin. The slight wound was almost impossible to locate. The horse had gone lame somewhere between the hoof and the hip. Where? The question could be answered only by the *gaxa* who stippled the horse.

ALL through the years of my childhood I served as official "coffee cooler" for the three cronies, when they met and smoked together, and sat in silence through the twilight. Then with the darkness, came coffee and refilled pipes and the chips were down. The *powmini* started with the customary "Do you recollect when—?" And invariably one of the three was the villain of the incident. The conversation was carried on between the other two as though the culprit were absent from the group. They lifted eyebrows and shook their heads in shame for having once associated with such a scoundrel. Grandpa would heckle Uncle Heconida with one similar to the following:

" 'Pasco, do you recollect the time that Omaha fellow, Heconida, blinked the antelopes and got Mormons?" Then Grandpa and Otopasco would chuckle, and shake their heads at the thought of the shameful event, while custom demanded Uncle Heconida keep quiet and pretend to be embarrassed. Fragments of the story were tossed back and forth by Grandpa and Otopasco until the shameful tale had been unfolded in its entirety.

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The hard-riding sons of Nauvoo were bad losers when their horses were heisted. They were good frontiersmen and better trackers. Many an Indian heister was run ragged by them. Grandpa used to say, "They would run six good horses to death to catch a heister with one bad one." The moral to that one was, "When you heist a Mormon, be sure you get his fastest." The brush with them resulted from Heconida's hunger for fresh antelope meat, and he employed the Omaha technique in hunting them. Concealing himself in mesquite on the down-wind side, he blinked the antelope in the eye with his mirror. While its curiosity drew it closer to the blinking nuisance, Otopasco, with bow and arrows, had hidden in a cross-wind position near the course the curious animal would instinctively take toward the flickering light. But Uncle Heconida's mirror had simultaneously aroused the curiosity of a band of Mormons out searching for heisted horses. It took two days for the *gaxas* to lead the determined Mormons away off and lose them, then circle back to where some mighty thirsty Mormon mounts were hidden.

WITH the close of the story, the two old men would chuckle, and then pretending to discover that the culprit was among those present, they would point fingers at Heconida and have a good laugh at him. But it was now his turn to carry the ball, and another's turn to blush in shame at his retort.

"But don't you recollect, Otopasco, that wasn't the end of the trouble? Remember that Bay Mormon?" The two of them lifted their brows at Grandpa and he would hump his shoulders and hang his head in shame as the private conversation of Heconida and Otopasco revealed the second chapter of the story. "I knew that Bay Mormon of Bear-Step's was bad medicine. Recollect how the young mare got in heat and kicked the stuffings out of the Hopi Geldings and seduced that Whipple Stud? Their tracks led, like the crow flies, back to the Mormon settlement where she'd given birth to her first colt."

Every stolen horse was named after the settlement from which it was admitted to membership in the clan, and in many cases, before. They appraised the stock and planned their moves in advance. The cream of the corral was carefully selected before the heist. Such names as "Bay Mormon," "Piute Paint," "Whipple Stud" (souvenir of Fort Whipple) were self-explanatory. The Hopi Indians gelded some of their horses, and the heisters loved them because they gave the least trouble. A mare got mean spells, and would bite and kick other horses, and then run for home wherever it was. A stallion would whinny and raise the devil at the very time he shouldn't. So when other horses got near, they had to make him sniff tobacco. Then he would get so busy sneezing, he neither heard nor smelled them. But Grandpa said that was not true. With a sniff of that awful Apache tobacco, neither horse nor man would give a damn.

To this very day, the Indian doesn't live who isn't a pushover for the Appaloosa, the war horse with the spotted rump. The Nez Perce Indians had spent two hundred years of gelding and scientific breeding to develop the wonder horse with unbelievable stamina. The breed outdid the mounts of General Wright's Cavalry so badly, he later con-

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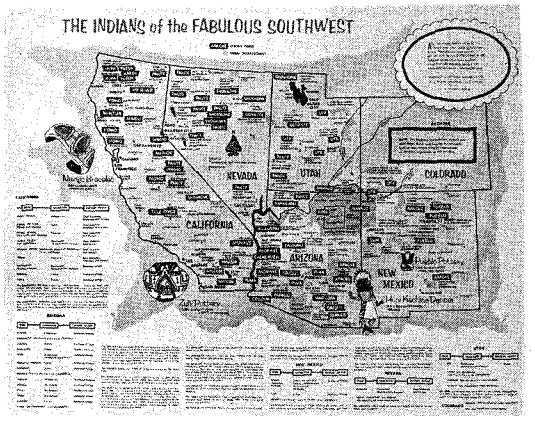

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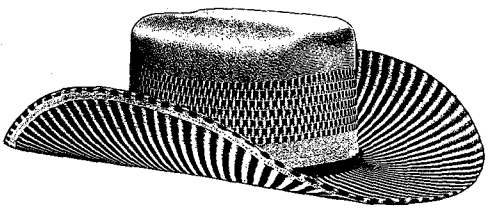

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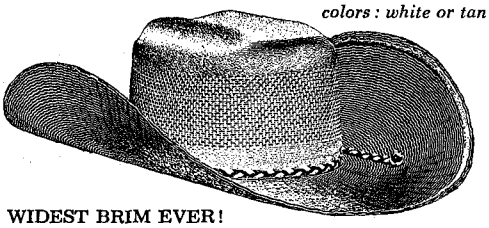

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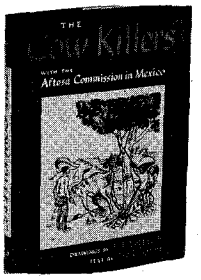

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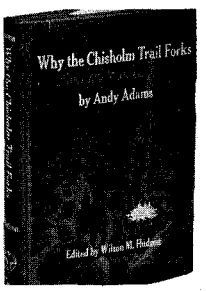

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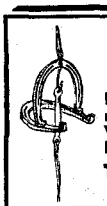

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ceived the idea of defeating the Indians by destroying the magnificent strain, and ordered them shot on sight. The horse with the spotted rump was marked for death. Eight hundred of the riderless mounts were destined to be slaughtered, and the breed to become almost extinct.

About the year 1855, some of these mounts had been traded and stolen from the Nez Perce Tribe and were possessed by the Crow, Blackfoot, Cheyenne and Dakota Sioux Tribes, later to become annexed to the Clan and identified as "Loosy Crow," "Loosy Foot," "Shy Loosy," "Soo Loosy," etc. The term "Loosy" meant the horse was tops among the blue bloods of horsedom, the Horse A'Palouse', *piece de resistance* and *grand prix* of the horse thief, The *gaxa* would gladly risk his life and his hereafter for a chance to heist the "Loosy."

And so the chain of talk went on and on into the night. Three white-haired cronies drank coffee and smoked, while three young braves rode in retrospect through saw-toothed mountains and blistering deserts; fighting, feasting, flirting with death, thirsting and drinking raw blood from their mounts to keep on living, and "putting fun" into their adventurous lives.

Then suddenly the flash of fresh fuel on dying embers would destroy their delusions. Interim years fell away like shattered glass and shocked them with sudden realization—those events had taken place many, many moons ago. The hideous future was here and was stifling them. Horse stealing had become looked upon with disrespect. Yes, the downhill slope was steep, very steep indeed. Silently, each old brave would puff his lifeless pipe, knock the dead tobacco ash into his hand, then stand and drop it into the fire. Rubbing his hands together, he would say, "I go now," and without further adieu, he would disappear into the night. Then Grandpa Bear-Step would sit alone and stare at his fire late into the night. Sometimes he would be smiling, and I wondered what he was thinking about.

JACK FROST paints fantastic pictures on bedroom windows when it is November in Oklahoma. One early morning sun revealed phantom forests of palm trees and glistening jungle ferns, and I fancied seeing an inverted hoofprint there.

Then I found Grandpa Bear-Step with his pipe. There were dead tobacco ashes in his cold hand and he was smiling into a fire that had died in the night.

Silently, expressionless, and seemingly without emotion, Heconida and Otopasco stood beside me, while a Christian Minister dropped a handful of earth onto Grandpa Bear-Step's casket. But in the red soil of the Cimarron Country, broken Apache and Omaha hearts were buried with their Cherokee-Comanche *Wathon.*

Otopasco and Heconida came with me to erect a small stone marker, then we opened the grave and put in tobacco and corn, and Otopasco put in a small piece of turquoise. Then the grave was good.

Grandpa Bear-Step was happily hunting.

Nowadays, Oklahomans may respectfully tell you, "This is one of the many graves of our Indian dead." But a half century ago some of those Indians could have told you, "This man was, perhaps, the greatest horse thief the West ever knew, and his method of heisting probably saved more lives of white pioneers than did any other person, because he believed and taught that it was sinful and bad luck to kill a man for his horse."

I continued to build the open fire, cook the coffee and load the pipes. The two remaining braves came back to "sit in" through the sacred minutes of twilight, and on into the darkness of night, to stare at the glowing coals in silence. Another story was never told. With Grandpa Bear-Step, many stories that will never become known were buried.

With the following dark of the moon, Heconida, White Horn the Omaha, was dead because he cared no longer to live.

It was winter and I kept the open fire burning, coffee hot and filled pipes in readiness, for the lonely Otopasco often came and "sat in" in silence. It was then the stone faced Apache Strong Man paid me my greatest compliment, when he asked me to sit beside him. He offered me his pipe and I smoked it, and became dizzy with the realization that I was no longer a "coffee cooler." I smoked with the great Apache Brave, Otopasco. I smoked his pipe as his equal, and became a man. I was very proud as we men sat side by side during those sacred minutes when it is neither daylight nor dark.

Then, when sky and earth no longer met, and the gray horizon of the West became lost, it was again dark of the moon, and time to make talk with the mouth. I gave him back his lighted pipe and he smoked. Then, peering at familiar faces within the glowing embers, he spoke:

"Heconida the Omaha has saved my life many times. Now he is dead. Cherokee Bear-Step, the Comanche Man, has saved my life many times. Now he is dead. Only I now live and walk alone to their fire, to look upon dry cups, and feel cold, empty pipes of them, and to hurt bad and die inside of me. I go now."

And the grand old Apache Strong Man, last of the great *gaxas,* tossed white tobacco ash into the fire, and silently disappeared forever into the black shadows of *Mi Ashe Ton.*

Come On! Be Quick!

(Continued from page 15)

ter was at last aware of the large force of the enemy he was about to attack? If Benteen's troops were so badly needed, why didn't Custer await their arrival before attacking?

Unfortunately for history, Custer never divulged his plan of battle to any officer that survived. The dispositions he ordered—an attack by Reno on the Indians' center, a probe in force by Benteen on their right, and the major assault by his own command against their left—seem to indicate a certain basic preparation. Was this message a belated attempt to change the plan?

The complete answers to those questions died with Custer. All that is left to us is this yellowed bit of paper, now displayed on the upper floor of the West Point Museum. Here, amid the scenes that Custer knew as a Cadet and less than a mile from his grave, it mutely rests. It is only one of many mysteries associated with the battle of the Little Big Horn, the greatest victory ever scored by Indians over the United States Army.

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Brag Dog

(Continued from page 23)

that sent Black Gal flying through the the air. That big black devil stood in one spot and kicked every few seconds, whether there was a dog heeling him or not. It didn't take much of that business to teach the dogs to stay away from the back end of that bull, and figure out new tactics.

Coon and the pups started working on the bull's sides, and Joe started cutting his nose. He'd work in a tight little figure-eight, and every time he got to the middle of the figure, he cut the bull's nose. The bull nearly got him with a horn a dozen times, but Joe was so agile he always managed to escape.

The dogs worked steadily for about fifteen minutes, pulled off for a short rest in the creek, and went back at the bull. They kept it up forty-five minutes this time, and the bull hadn't moved ten yards. The pups were still in fair shape, but Coon was completely played out and Joe was slowing up more and more. I was afraid one of the dogs would get killed if they kept at it, so I called them off.

Bob had a twelve-gauge shotgun with him. He loaded it with birdshot, aimed at the bull and let fly from a distance of about fifteen yards. The bull grunted and moved a step as the shot hit him, but he didn't run. Bob shot seven more times and still the bull didn't move. We gave up.

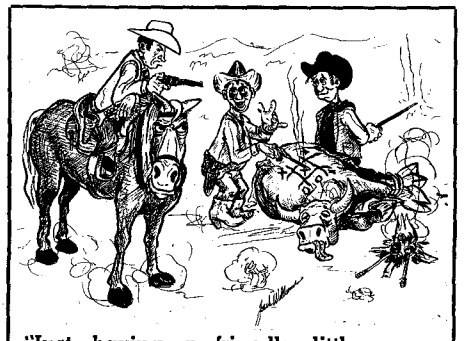
Early the next morning, we went to the pasture on a wild hog hunt. We didn't intend to bother the bull, but when the old cuss saw the dogs he moved fast. He headed for the back fence at a high trot and jumped it with plenty to spare. The last we saw of him, he was still going.

That's the only bull I've ever seen that a dog couldn't move. Most of them just can't stand to have a dog heel them.

A couple of years ago we bought a Santa Gertrudis bull. He was fairly gentle to handle, but was bad about jumping out of the pasture. Ellis was handling our cattle, and—as Patsy and Black Gal had died—I had given him one of Joe's pups out of Coon. Ellis named her Cooney-Jo. She had been a pretty pup, but a bad attack of worms had stunted her. She was thin as a rail and didn't weigh over twenty pounds.

The Santa Gertrudis bull jumped out that day, and I told Ellis I'd go get the horses, so we could put him back in the pasture. Ellis lit a cigarette and said without cracking a smile, "Jus' sit still. My cowdog'll put that bull back in."

Well, it seemed silly to send that scrawny little pup after the bull, but I kept my mouth shut and sat down to watch. Man, it was a pretty sight! Cooney-Jo slipped in behind the bull and nipped his heel. She dropped to the ground when he jerked his foot forward; and when he kicked, his hoof went right over her head. She heeled him a second time. He gave up and jumped back into our pasture.



"Just having a friendly little game, Sheriff!"

Another of Joe's pups is owned by Jack Dove, of Kent, Washington. She goes for the milk cows each morning and evening. It's a mile to the back side of Jack's pasture, and she has been making the trip alone since she was just a few months old.

Jim Bob and I have sold Joe's pups into just about every cattle state in the nation. All of them carried a money back guarantee and not one has ever been returned as unsatisfactory, although we have had to replace a few pups by other sires.

But it's not just because Joe is an outstanding sire of cowdogs that I think so highly of him. There are other sires that are probably as good—Tom Stodghill's Bozo and Bodhark; Ernest Hestand's Solomon, to name three. Those dogs are top sires in any company.

There are better working dogs than Joe, too. Bob Bain has a pup named Amigo that is a more vicious heeler; he has been replacing two cowboys since he was nine months old. Our own junior stud, Heeler, works cattle as quietly and efficiently as a border collie works sheep; he's going to be a better worker than Joe.

No, the thing that rates Joe ace-high with me is his savvy. He always seems to know instinctively to do the right thing at the right time. Like the first time we took him wild hog hunting.

The river bottom near Rural Shade is full of wild hogs that are descended from domestic breeds. Most of the time they stay in the bottom and live on acorns and roots, but in the late summer they sometimes raid the cornfields on the edge of the bottom.

The summer Joe was two years old, the wild hogs were particularly destructive. Their cornfield raiding got so bad that Bob, Ellis, and I decided to catch us some hogs. Ellis had a pair of hounds, Happy and Blue, that were experienced hogdogs. I took Joe along just to see what he would do.

We were walking through bloodweeds neck deep, when the hounds jumped a drove of hogs. Joe had been following us—probably wondering where the cows were—but when Happy opened up, Joe went right to him.

A couple of minutes later we heard a hog-dog fight that was a whang-dilly! When we got through the weeds, the scrap was all over. The hounds were standing by, baying, and Joe was sitting on the ground with his teeth fastened in the ear of a young boar. He had never caught anything before. I don't know how he knew he was supposed to catch the hog—he just *knew*. That's the kind of dog he is.

JOE is a battle-scarred old veteran now. His muzzle is getting gray, and it tugs at your heart a little to see him growing old. He isn't as active as he used to be and one front leg is getting a little stiff. I write this from an air base in Labrador, but my wife, who loves Joe even more than I do, feeds and spoils him. Sometimes, Jim Bob Ivey or Sidney Westbrook work him a bit to keep him limbered up. He's slowed down, sure, but he still has that keen instinct

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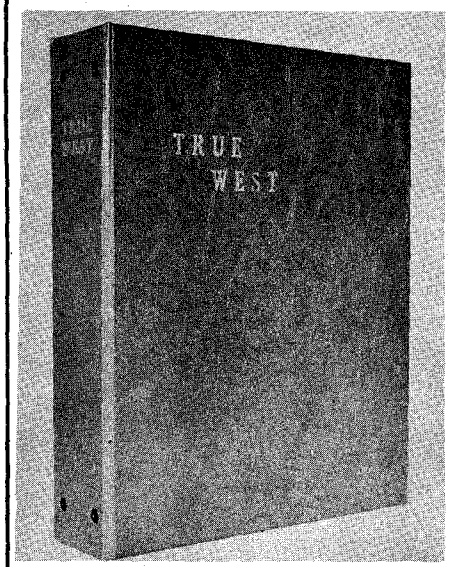

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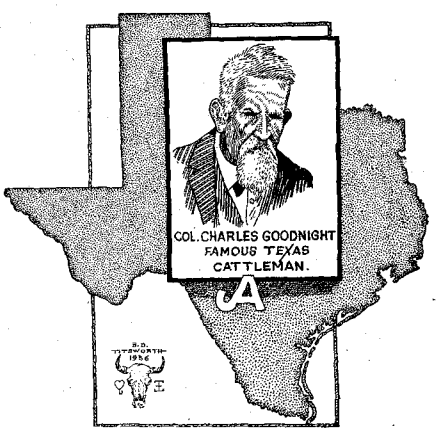
The horse looked at the boys a second or two, then backed his ears and charged. My wife ran to head him off, but she was too far away to reach him in time. Joe took off at the same instant and, lame leg and all, turned that horse just before he reached the boys.

I've raised and trained many a cowdog since the day I saw Pepper Joe for the first time. I intend to raise plenty more. But there'll always be a special place in my heart for one. Pepper Joe will always be my Brag Dog.



The Death of Joe Loving

(Continued from page 9)

But Loving, detesting night riding, one morning persuaded Wilson to give it up.

"Let's keep riding, Bill, and see if we can't make some time. We ain't seen hide nor hair of any Comanches."

NOTHING happened until about two in the afternoon, when Wilson spotted a cloud of dust moving toward them.

"Look there!" he exclaimed. "Comanches!"

Loving stared intently. "Big war party," he decided. "They've seen *us,* too. Let's get the hell out of here!"

They spurred their horses into a run and headed directly for the Pecos, about four miles to the northwest. Scrambling down a hundred-foot bluff, they crossed the river and hid themselves among the sand dunes and cane brakes. They took cover just in time, for the Indians were right behind them. In the hot, vicious gunfight that followed, Loving was wounded in the arm and side. Heavily armed with repeating rifles and six-guns, the white men were able to hold off the Indians until dark, when the Comanches withdrew.

Toward dawn, Loving begged Wilson to leave. "I'm dying," he said. "No sense of your getting killed, too. Get out of here and get back to the outfit."

Reluctantly, Wilson agreed. He left the six-shooting rifle and the five six-guns with Joe, taking only his Henry rifle. Carefully he eased himself into the river, and drifted under a clump of smartweeds held over his head until well past the Comanche sentries.

Three days later, Wilson stumbled into the outfit nearly dead from exhaustion. Immediately, Goodnight took fourteen men and hastened to find Loving. But Joe was not to be found. Goodnight could only assume that the Comanches had killed him and thrown his body into the river.

About two weeks later, the outfit met a party out of Fort Sumner which informed them that Loving was at the Fort. His bullet wounds had not proved fatal, and the next night after Wilson's departure he, too, had slipped into the river and drifted safely past the Indians. He crawled out on shore and lay hidden in the weeds all the next day. The following night, crawling through the brush, he had found a trail and followed it until he dropped unconscious. He remained where he had fallen for five days, when some Mexicans came along and carried him to Fort Sumner.

Goodnight and Wilson hurried to the Fort. As soon as they saw Loving's condition, they realized that his arm would have to come off. But it was too late. Joe was too far spent, and died from the shock of the operation on September 25, 1867.

"He was a game one," said Charles Goodnight simply when the Army doctor told him of Loving's death. The great cattleman's accolade stands as a fitting epitaph for Joe Loving.

Chicken at Midnight

(Continued from page 28)

busted loose! Ma was yelling and my old dog Bounce was a-barking like a whole bunch of hawks was dive-bombing the chickens. I woke up with a jerk, reached over and grabbed old Betsy, cocked her back both barrels and stepped out spraddle-legged so I wouldn't lose my britches. I intended to give the enemy both barrels, whether eagle, hawk or hummingbird.

Out in the sunshine I stepped with the old scatter-gun up at an angle of about forty-five degrees and my old bald dome shining like a new tin plate. Ma was hollering "Airplane, Airplane!"

There it was, up about two hundred feet. I had old Betsy trained right on it, and about that time old Bounce came yelling and looking up, expecting me to blast that big bird. He made a razzee 'twixt my spraddled-out legs, but didn't quite clear. *Wham!* Off went both barrels and kicked me up against the house.

I rose shakily to my feet, forgetting all about my britches being unbuckled. Ma looked at me in horror. "For God's *sake,* Pa!" she shrieked, "gather up your garments. Those people in the plane will think we're running a nudist colony!"

Yeah, I reckon I know more about chickens than I do about cows, I learned it all in six months.

Sunken Galleon Silver!

(Continued from page 16)

wagons disclosed that the treasure was missing.

Back up the trail clattered a detachment of soldiers to search the waters of Hendricks' Lake and recover the silver bars. But the rainy season was on and the swollen waters of the Sabine River had raised the lake level six feet and spread it out beyond its normal limits. All traces of the six wagons and their rich cargo had been obliterated. The search was hopeless. Disheartened, the soldiers returned to San Antonio.

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MANY years passed, and it was not until seventy-nine years later, in 1895, that another attempt was made to recover the silver. Three well-equipped Spaniards from Mexico arrived in East Texas to try their luck. Upon inspection of Hendricks' Lake, they decided to try draining it as the only possible means of locating and recovering the sunken treasure.

The hopeful Spaniards were doomed to disappointment. The lake was tricky. It was full of springs, and the land apparently seeped water around its entire perimeter. Soundings disclosed that slime and mire covered the lake's bottom to a depth of nearly ten feet above the hardrock bed. In some sections there were quicksand deposits on the bottom. Weeks of hard work produced nothing but disillusionment. The Spaniards packed up their outfit and went back to Mexico.

Nothing further was done in the search for the sunken silver treasure of Jean Lafitte's last haul until the late 1920's. Three bars of silver were accidentally hauled to the surface of Hendricks' Lake by fishermen—and the search was on again.

Again the treasure hunters failed. Today the silver still lies within its watery resting place, tantalizing, seemingly inaccessible. However, with the use of modern equipment and metal locators, there is an excellent chance for some enterprising salvor to hit the jackpot—$2,000,000 in pure bar silver.

Good Luck!

Last War Trail of Victorio

(Continued from page 21)

wrapped their feet in these, tied them with thongs, took along some spares, put out more feed for the dog, and set off for a hundred mile walk over a mountainous desert.

On January 18, 1880, Andrews and Wisehall walked into the Ysleta Ranger camp more dead than alive, minus all equipment save their guns, clothes in shreds, their feet torn and bleeding.

Their first thought was about their dog. Would the Rangers go get this faithful animal? There doubtless was a good deal of discussion. Rangers were sent to this wild country to protect people, not dogs.

The result of the discussion was that early one morning eight men under command of Sergeant J. B. Gillett saddled their horses, tied their food to the strings, and set out on a hundred mile ride through a dangerous country to rescue a dog.

The nine Rangers were gone a week. They found the dog still on guard. He did not know that these strange men coming on horseback were his friends. He set up a commotion. He had been told to keep off all comers and now he faced the Rangers from the top of the wall, hackles up, teeth bared. For fifteen days he had been alone. Finally, the Rangers persuaded him that they were his friends, and then he was as joyous as he had been vicious. He wrung his tail, he whined, he cavorted, he showed his fine teeth in that happy grin that is often seen on the face of a happy dog. He had not had an easy time. He had fought off the coyotes and other varmints, eaten all the bacon and most of the corn. He had stood the siege of the desert.

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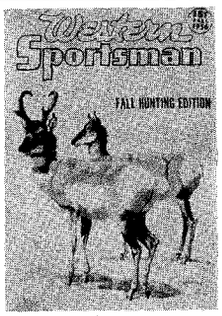

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That's what you'll be, Chum (mighty near) if you take us up on this offer—but we're the ones who's apt to get shot for the deed.

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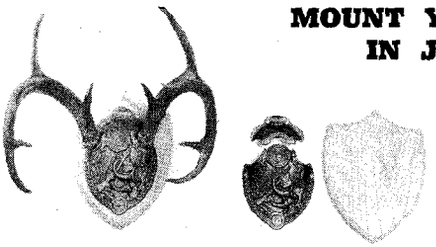

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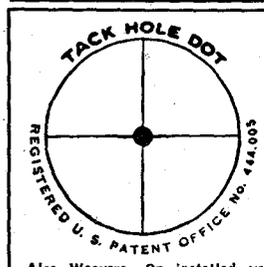

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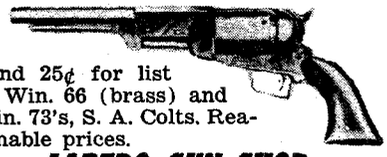

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

RANGE LIFE

BEFORE BARBED WIRE (Holt, $10), by Mark H. Brown and W. R. Felton, is sure to receive serious consideration when the critics select the best Western book of 1956. It is a companion volume to their THE FRONTIER YEARS, the 1955 choice of these old Westerners. If anything, the Huffman photos in this book are better than those in the 1955 volume. This is also a mighty good history of range life in the early days of Montana. Huffman was there—he visited the pioneer ranches, he went on the roundups, he watched the breaking of a rough string and he took pictures of every phase of range work. And he made notes and records that have been skillfully used by the authors in completing a colorful story of cattle and sheep on the High Plains. Kohrs, Huidekoper, Stuart, and many other famous names in early Montana cow history also contribute to this fine history. Charlie Russell, the great cowboy artist and story teller, is also quoted. A great book—don't miss it.

THE COW KILLERS (University of Texas Press, $4.95) by Fred Gipson is a charming true story of how the cooperative work of the United States and Mexican governments stamped out the disastrous hoof-and-mouth disease in Mexico since 1949. Fred Gipson, author of such excellent books as HOUND DOG MAN, HOME PLACE and OLD YELLER, wrote the story around the experiences of Bill Leftwich, Texas cowboy, and other members of the Aftosa Commission in Mexico. Readability is enhanced with numerous comical illustrations made on the scene of action by Leftwich. Writer and artist have developed an interesting account of a little-known episode in U. S.-Mexican relationships. This is an astute reporting job where clinical details are held to a minor key, tragedy is smothered in kindly humor and human understanding proves to be the conquering force in a two-nation project.

INDIAN HISTORY

Oliver La Farge's A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN (Crown, $7.50) is a big fine book containing 350 illustrations, including many in full color. La Farge's text is also very good and this is a satisfying presentation. Among the famous western artists represented with illustrations are Catlin, Bodmer, and Remington. Worthwhile.

INDIAN WARS

WITH CROOK AT THE ROSEBUD (Stackpole, $5.50), by J. W. Vaughn, is a well-documented history of the Battle of the Rosebud and the events instrumental in causing the Custer massacre. This battle, thirty miles southeast—happening one week before the Battle of the Little Bighorn—little known except to a few investigators—had more soldiers and was of far greater historical significance.

Northward from Sheridan, Wyoming, in the middle of June 1876, Brigadier General George Crook moved 1325 foot soldiers and cavalrymen along the banks of the little Rosebud River in southern Montana. This main force marching against the Oglala Sioux and Cheyenne under Crazy Horse was fiercely attacked by the Indians compelling Crook to retreat to his Sheridan, Wyoming, base forty miles south.

There is a rare old tintype of Crazy Horse believed to be the only picture ever taken of the camera-shy chief.

THE INDIAN WARS OF MINNESOTA (Torch Press, $5.50), by Captain Louis H. Roddis (Medical Corps, Retired, U. S. Navy), is a well-documented narrative of Indian troubles in the State. Particular attention is given to the Sioux uprising during the Civil War and to the Leech Lake troubles of 1898, believed to be the last Indian outbreak in the United States. This is a big handsome book with 14 illustrations, with numerous notes and a good index. It fills the gap that has long existed in Minnesota historical writings.

BEARS!

Margaret Merrill's BEARS IN MY KITCHEN (McGraw-Hill, $3.95) is mighty good story-telling. The story of the city girl, who married the handsome young Park Ranger and spent her honeymoon at a remote station in Yosemite, has the light touch. While her approach is gay, there are moments of danger and tragedy which cannot be entirely avoided in the high country where tourists and hunters are oftentimes foolish. It is also the story of our National parks and the dedicated personnel who operate them.

GRIZZLIES IN THEIR BACK YARD (Messner, $3.95), by Beth Day, is the story of young Jim Stanton and his wife, Laurette, who thirty years ago gave up their Seattle apartment and settled down in the British Columbia woods for life. Their immediate neighbors were inmates of the biggest grizzly bear colony in the world. In fact, they made pets of three grizzlies and lived to tell their story. They've survived many northwoods' hardships like being broke and snowed in without provision so they lived off the country. They hunted and trapped and became authorities on grizzlies and other wildlife of the country around Knight's Inlet.

Reading this book will make you want to take to the woods.

MENNONITE MIGRATION

EXILED BY THE CZAR (The Mennonite Press, $2.75), by Gustav E. Reimer and G. R. Gaeddert, is primarily the story of Cornelius Jansen and the great Mennonite migration of 1874. Jansen grew up in Prussia but, disliking the restrictions placed on the Mennonites there, moved to South Russia. The threat of military conscription in Prussia seems to have been a major cause of Mennonite migration to Russia, and certainly the 1870 decision of Russia to introduce a general military service was the final straw in starting a major exodus out of Russia to the United

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States. This is the story of the new start and of the successes and failures of Jansen and the Mennonites who settled in Kansas, Nebraska, and The Dakotas. There is a fine account of the Jansen sheep ranch in Nebraska. Good illustrations and notes—a nicely printed, worthwhile book at a very reasonable price.

CALIFORNIA

FILING FROM AN OLD SAW (John Howell, $10) is by Joseph T. Downey and edited by Fred B. Rogers. It is the first book printing of a series of 18 articles that appeared in San Francisco newspaper, THE GOLDEN ERA, in 1873. These reminiscences of the San Francisco and California of 1845-47 are by a keen observer blessed with a puckish sense of humor. If the events Downey recorded were not all exactly earth shaking and if he did not always write of people of importance, it was all entertaining. Only two complete files of the newspaper are known, so Warren Howell has rendered a distinct service to the students of California in publishing this book. It was designed by Lawton Kennedy and beautifully printed in an edition of 750 copies.

THE TREASURES OF MISSION SANTA INES (Academy of California Church History, $5.00), by Kurt Baer, is an excellent history and catalog of the paintings, sculpture and craft works at Mission Santa Ines, located in the Santa Inez Valley in California.

Here is a vivid study of the chronology of planning, building, expansion, rise and near ruin of the old mission. It is richly illustrated with scenes in and around the mission. There is a glossary of liturgical terms, brief biographies of saints whose pictures may be seen at the mission and a guide to the mission.

THE BATTLES OF PEACE

Robert Bunker's OTHER MEN'S SKIES (Indiana University Press, $4.50) is a top-notch book about the Pueblo Indians. As an Indian Service employee, Bunker watched, aided in, and recorded the struggles of the various Pueblos with modern day problems. The Indian Veterans, with their considerable knowledge of the outside, created a particular knotty one for the older stay-at-home Indians to solve. This is a very human and a very wise book—it should be on the required reading list of every non-Indian that has business relations with the Pueblos. Well written and entertaining

A SIOUX CHRONICLE (University of Oklahoma Press, $5), by George E. Hyde, is a highly entertaining history of those years of *peace* between 1878 and 1890. This is the story of the Sioux's constant struggle against the ill-conceived attempts to make them into peaceful farmers—of their dislike of schools—of their resistance to being molded into the image of the white man. It is the story of Spotted Tail, Red Cloud, Hump, American Horse and other great Sioux leaders. The *battles of peace* led up to the Ghost Dances and ended in the bloody massacre at Wounded Knee. Historian Hyde calls them as he sees them and such favorably known agents as McGillycuddy and McLoughlin and even General George Crook come out somewhat tarnished for their parts in the battles of peace. (It is said General Crook's death was hastened by the failure of Congress to live up to promises he made in persuading the Sioux to sign away a big slice of their reservation.) This is an important book, and despite

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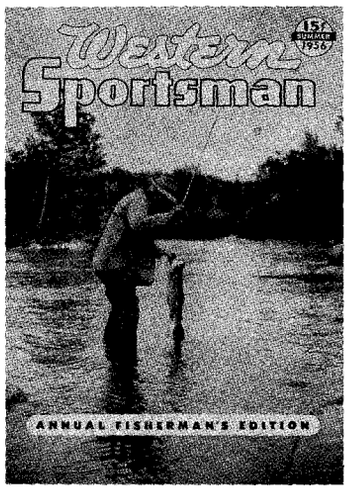

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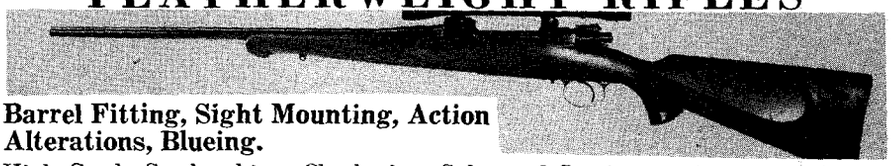

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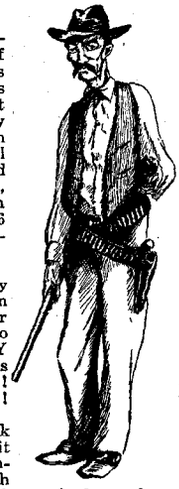

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the author's known friendship for the Sioux, this reviewer believes an objective one. Good notes, index and photos add to its value. Definitely recommended.

Any of the books reviewed above by The Old Bookaroos are available at prices listed—postage paid if cash with order. Books listed below are also available:

SITTING BULL, CHAMPION OF SIOUX, Vestal..$5.00
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W. M. MORRISON
Eagle Nest, New Mexico

I Looked Death in the Eye!

(Continued from page 26)

wall was a cabinet with more guns than a shooting-gallery. A banner said TEXAS JACK, THE FAMOUS BANDIT FRIEND OF JESSE JAMES.

We talked pleasantly about nothing, then I asked him to tell me about his life as a train robber. He did and with great glee. Then I said, "When and where did you know Jesse James?"

He rattled it off, mentioning a town that I felt pretty sure Jesse had never been in. I made the mistake of telling him so.

He looked at me with the expression of a man cracking hazelnuts with his teeth. "Are you calling me a liar?"

I mumbled I wasn't.

"How long did you know him?" I asked.

"For years."

I told him no one knew Jesse for years, for the simple reason that there was a reward on his head of $10,000 dead or alive, and that Jesse was not going out socially. He said he shore as hops did know him for years and that I was a liar.

"Did you call me a liar?" I demanded.

"I did," said Texas Jack.

I let it go.

I asked him where Jesse had hidden.

"I won't tell you," he said.

"You don't know," I said.

"Then you'll go and publish all kinds of lies about me, when I am a reformed man and my reputation will be ruined."

"I'll publish the truth."

He looked at me with an eye that was cold as a mothball and said, "I don't like you an' I'm goin' to pull down on you."

Reaching under his pillow he brought out a pistol that looked as big as a water plug. "I'm an old man and I ain't got many years to live, so I don't care what happens to me."

I would like to report that I looked him squarely in the eye and told him to throw down the gun and not be a fool—but *alas!* I didn't.

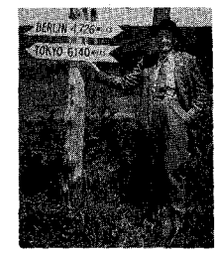
I began to back out and when I got to the door I ran down the hall like an antelope. I say it with shame. But, on the other hand, I am still here.

I didn't report it to the police, for my part was not very heroic.

The old outlaw died January 7, 1950, at the age of 84, and was buried near St. Paul, Arkansas, the last of the old-time horse-and-saddle bandits. As I analyze it now, I don't think he ever knew Jesse James, but, as a youngster, he probably saw Jesse and blew this up into a buddy situation.

I now look back on the experience with a smile, but I didn't smile when I was bounding down that hallway. In fact, I have a kind of sneaking admiration for the old codger.

Homer Croy is the genial author of *Corn Country, Jesse James was My Neighbor,* and numerous other books. His latest book is *Wheels West,* the true story of the Donner Party, which, as Homer graphically describes it, "got caught in the snows of the High Sierras and et each other up."



A native of Missouri, Mr. Croy now headquarters in New York City, but continues to spend much of his time in the Jesse James country of his youth.

Battling Bulls

(Continued from page 25)

measure. Within a remarkably short time he had cleared the ring of both bovine and human tormentors.

The angry Mexicans, having the advantage of being on home soil, attached Ned for $500, claiming he had failed to kill the bulls as agreed. Then finding themselves with an elephant on their hands, but with no one brave enough to handle him, they left Ned in the arena for the night.

At a late hour, when all was dark and quiet, young Clark, son of Ned's owner, slipped into the shadows near the massive gates of the bull ring. He found the gates secured by heavy locks; so he called to the elephant and Ned chirped a reply. Again he called: "Come out Ned." And Ned came, bringing a big chunk of the gate along with him.

Some years later Ned was purchased by the late Al G. Barnes, master wild animal showman, who re-christened the elephant "Tusko." Under that name he became famous as a giant of his kind and infamous as a bad elephant. His remarkable career came to a close when he died peaceably in the Seattle zoo.

Truly Western

(Continued from page 29)

Lost San Saba Mine is a myth because there is no mineral outcrops in the area. There is the possibility that the so-called "Mine" could have been a storehouse of the early Spaniards for the gold and silver produced in some of their mines farther west.

For a number of years, various people have dug into a mountain east of Goldthwaite, Texas, in search of treasure presumably hidden by the Spaniards. In 1948 I saw some very large liveoak timber, used for shoring ceilings and walls of the shaft, taken from this site. There are several tunnels drifting off from the main shaft that were partially filled with loose earth. This area was supposed to be the Banking Mission of the Lost San Saba Mines. Thus goes the many tales of Coronado's children. There is quite a yarn behind this supposed Banking Mission. It should prove interesting reading for your readers. Why don't you investigate it?—Albert Field, P. O. Box 323, Lampasas, Texas. **Can anybody help out on this?**

And Speaking of Lost Mines . . .
Editor, TRULY WESTERN:

While visiting in Wyoming last summer, I received two copies of TRUE WEST. I was delighted, having often wondered why such a magazine had not been printed before. I have since subscribed, and ordered and received eight

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back issues. Seeing all the hooraw about lost mines in the magazine and the excitement it stirs up among your readers, I thought you might be interested in a practical view of these so-called Lost Mines:

I have mined quite a bit, and in the winter of 1924-25, I owned a good lead mine here in Oronogo, Missouri, where I now live. I have made many trips, both in Wyoming and Missouri, to see a deposit of mineral that someone had found, only to find that the discoverer was a blasted liar. I have failed to find one single shine on these trips!

Also, I have had plenty of experience with people who KNEW where there was gold and silver, copper, lead, zinc, etc.—only to learn that they were just leading me on to buy the drinks or loan them a couple of bucks. While living in Casper, I had many people tell me they knew where I could pan out up to two dollars a day in gold—and with a sluice-box, why man, you could make a fortune! Unfortunately, however, there was never enough water in the summer to run a sluice-box. So I decided to build a small machine that could be used as a wet or dry washer. After I had completed the machine, a friend and I took it a couple of miles up the Platte River to try it. Dadgum if it didn't work fine; we caught a few shines of fine gold right off! We figured if it could catch the fine gold in the Platte, it would work any place. But do you know, after I had let it be known that I had such a machine, nobody knew where there was any gold at all!

Frankly, knowing how folks wag their tongues and build up everything out of all proportion to the truth, I don't believe there ever was a Dutchman's Lost Mine in the Superstition Mountains of Arizona. Let's try to evaluate the legend with at least as much sense as the good Lord bestowed on a jackass, and see what we come up with. (I know, that's a tough proposition for most of us—but let's TRY!)

Walzer was a mining engineer, and worked for several mining companies. Now, being a mining engineer, Walzer was in a perfect position to steal gold from the company. The Dutchman was a smart operator, so to cover up his theft, he made it appear that he had a mine in the Superstitions. He made a big deal out of trailing into the mountains ever so often so that suckers would think he really had such a mine. He even killed a few of them that tried to follow him; otherwise his phony scheme would have been exposed. I'll bet a nugget to a plugged peso that right there is the "Mystery of the Dutchman's Lost Mine."

Let me give you another example: the "Lost Cabin Mine," in Wyoming.

Seven Swedish miners left the Black Hills in South Dakota on foot and headed across the Big Horn Mountains on a prospecting trip. After they had crossed the mountains, they found a rich placer deposit and panned out $5,000 in gold in three days. They built a cabin with the intention of staying awhile and getting rich. They were attacked by Indians, their cabin burned and five of the miners killed. The other two miraculously escaped and headed toward Douglas. One died on the way from exhaustion and exposure; the other man lived three days after reaching Douglas. This poor feller died before he could tell anyone where the mine was located, but of course he lasted long enough to tell

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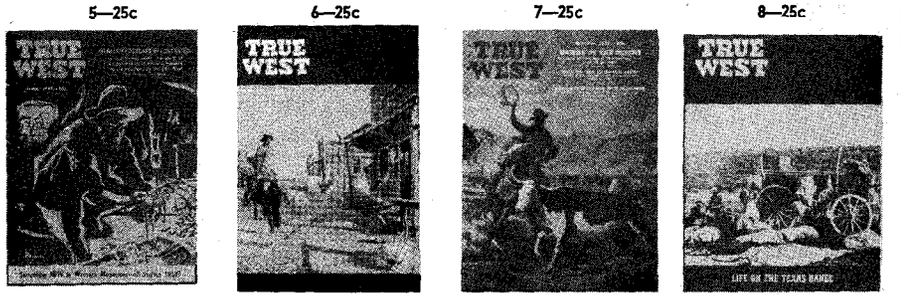

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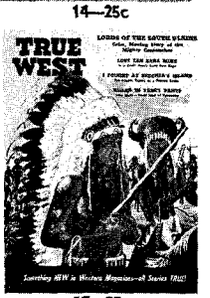

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about the Indian attack and the sad fate of his six comrades.

Now that's a mighty touching story and some deluded folks are still looking for the Lost Cabin Mine. You think it *could* happen? Okay, let's read sign a bit:

Think hard now; can you imagine seven men walking all the way across the rugged Big Horn Mountains, carrying all the necessary equipment they'd need just to live, mine, and build a cabin?

At a bare minimum, they'd have to lug the following essential items: Guns to secure game and protect them from the Indians, knives, gold pans, shovels, bedrolls, an axe, small prospectors' picks. Also, they would have to carry a small supply of basic foodstuff, such as flour, coffee, salt, beans and bacon. They'd have to have a skillet and a coffee pot, a kettle to cook meat and beans in, tin cups for coffee and a few tin plates. None of these items have ever been found.

In my opinion, these miners stole some gold from a mine in the Black Hills and headed for the mint in Denver. They got into a row among themselves over the division of the gold and all but two of them were killed. The two survivors tried to get out of the country with all the gold. They didn't make it, and the last one alive—thinking he had a chance to pull through—told the mine story to explain his possession of the gold.

It is a well known fact that for many years miners have stolen gold from the mines where they worked. In the 1930's, a gang of gold thieves were caught, with headquarters in Denver. This gang had been stealing and receiving stolen gold from the famous Homestake Mine and other mines in the Black Hills for many years. Their take ran into the millions of dollars.

No, *amigos*, these lost mine tales make interesting reading, but the mines themselves never existed. I am still interested in prospecting, but I am NOT looking for lost mines. If I ever find one, I'll sure see to it that it never gets lost again! If you know where there is any mineral, drop me a line. I'm still a sucker for a touch!—Fred Allen, P. O. Box 35, Oronogo, Missouri.

Old Prospector Passes

Dear Mr. Wiltsey:

I enclose a news item that appeared in our local paper, *The Phoenix Gazette*, telling of the death of my grand old friend, Walter (Pop) Grayson on December 10, 1956. Pop was partly the collaborator of my article *Did the Dutchman Find Montezuma's Treasure?* (January-February TRUE WEST). He was the "Billy Gaylord" of the story. He was a great guy and the best friend I ever had, on the trail, in the mines, or throughout life.

The ways of life are odd and inscrutable. Our friendship started in adversity and ended likewise in one respect, for I found Pop lying on a ledge with a broken hip, and only due to my tracking ability did I find him then. In the ending of our life-long friendship, I would not have known of his death had I not seen this newspaper account of his passing. I and my family visited Pop six months before his death, at Blue Point, 30 miles northeast of Phoenix. He seemed bright and chipper as ever then.

Together, we made the trek to Mexico, searched through the archives of Mexican history, traveled hundreds of miles in search of information following elusive tales, running down every lead that was given to us. Together, we talked to scores of old prospectors, sifting and evaluating what they had to tell us. Now this grand old man of the West has taken his last trail into the sunset. We buried Pop on a knoll, overlooking the Salt River and Blue Point, his home in Tonto National Forest. We, his friends, hope to establish a permanent memorial there in his honor.—Carl Howe, 1101 E. Hess Street, Phoenix, Arizona.

From *The Phoenix Gazette*, December 10, 1956:

"Walter (Pop) Grayson died Monday in his home—the open country of the Blue Point Picnic Grounds northeast of this city. Pop was reportedly 96, and he spent 74 years in Arizona living the romantic life of a semi-hermit. He spent his early life driving stage, skinning mules, and working with the Dutchman, Jacob Walz, of the famous Lost Dutchman Mine. He was too realistic to believe in the lost mine, but he did spend several months in Mexico searching for Aztec treasure and tracking down all the leads he could find.

"'He probably knew more trails and hills in Arizona than any man in the state,' said Carl Howe, 1101 East Hess, a long-time friend. 'He spent more than 50 years in the Arizona hills, and I've seen him run provisions to more than one broke prospector to keep him going. He weighed only 125 pounds in his prime, but he was all man.'"

WANTED—Information on How The Pioneers Lived

Editor TRUE WEST:

Along with the cowpokes and noble (or otherwise) red men, there was a lot of the Old West that did not have the drama of blood and stampede. Can you find any of the oldtimers who know how to build a soddy? How did they keep the water out—when any? Did they hand dig their own wells—alone? What did they do for a toothache? How did they keep in fuel and supplies during the winters?

It's getting late to gather this kind of vital information, for most of these rugged characters who opened the country are gone now. It is of utmost importance that those who are left leave a record behind them. With things as they are nowadays, our survivors may need to know how to throw up a soddy!—Glenn T. Gough, O. D., 710 Kansas—Second Floor, Topeka, Kansas.

Editor's Note: We want more articles telling of the daily lives and struggle for existence of the pioneers.

Coming Up!

(Continued from page 2)

big crash, appearing in a national magazine in 1956, was so inaccurate in at least one important detail that Frank Barnes decided to write the true story of the wreck exclusively for TRUE WEST.

Winding up the full length articles next issue is Maggie Red Oldham's "Tragedy Trail of Harry Tracy." Like Ernie Cashel, Tracy was a late arrival on the Western crime scene. His escape from the Oregon State Penitentiary in June, 1902, triggered the greatest manhunt the West has ever known. Wounded, unable to walk, Tracy committed suicide rather than surrender to the lawmen surrounding him.

Short subjects include V. Whitlock's amusing yarn "Pearl Diving Cowpoke;" all about the misadventures of a cowhand who wound up flat busted in a strange town. Also, Forest Crossen's ironic little tale of a pretty dance hall girl who tried to take a cowboy for a sucker—twice!

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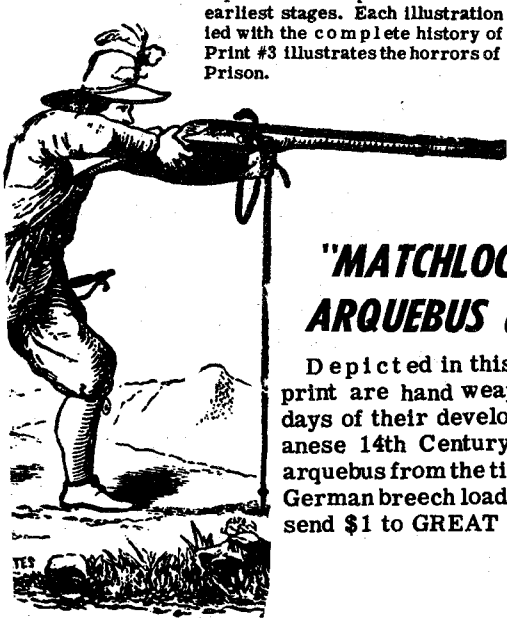

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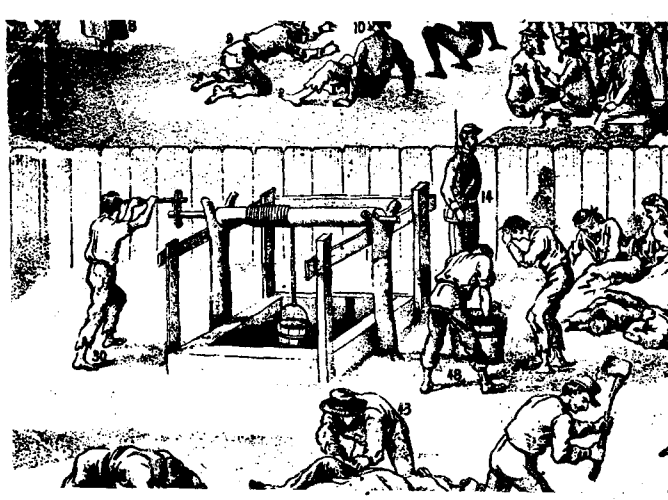

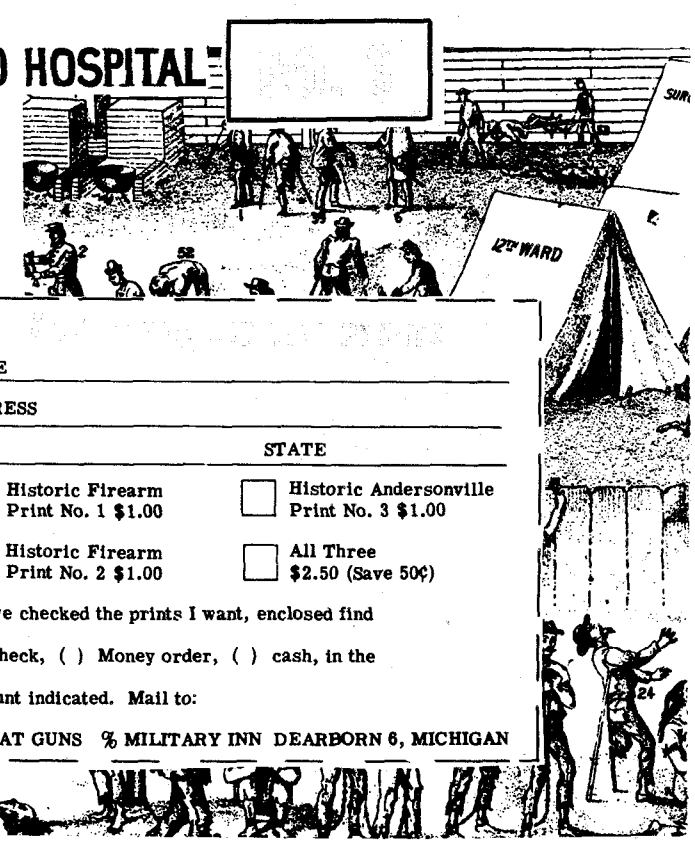

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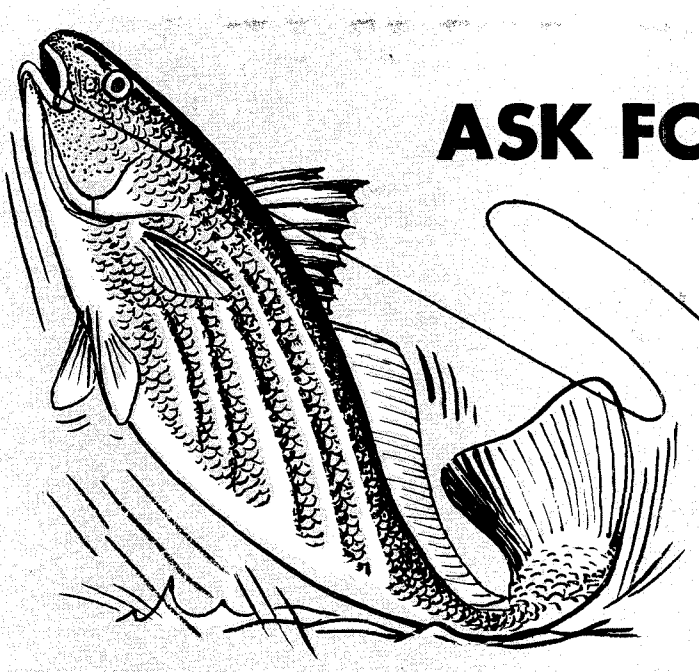

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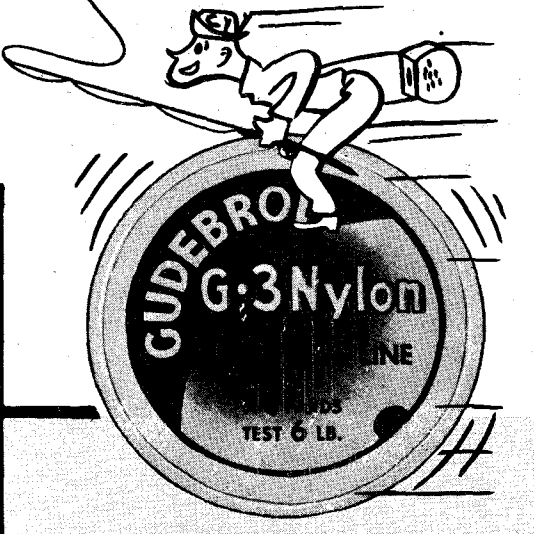

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